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The white fields of France
or, The story of Mr.

THE

WHITE FIELDS OF FRANCE;

OR,

THE STORY OF MR. M'ALL'S MISSION TO THE WORKING-MEN OF PARIS AND LYONS.

BY

HORATIUS BONAR, D.D.

THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

"Look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest."—JOHN iv. 35.

"I thank God for the unspeakable goodness which He has shown to so many of my fellow-countrymen, who have learned in your Meetings to know Jesus Christ, His Divine Son."—LETTER FROM AN *Ouvrier* TO MR. M'ALL IN 1874.

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PRINCETON
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PREFACE.

I WOULD state in a few sentences my reasons for writing, or rather compiling, this little book.

1. I wish the Churches of Great Britain, and of America also, to be better acquainted with the spiritual condition, past as well as present, of Paris and of France. Amid many shadows, there is in it more of brightness and hopefulness than many suppose. There are "white fields" gleaming amid miles of moorland.

2. I wish to call their earnest attention to the work now going on under Mr. M'All; a work which has proved its solidity by a history of nearly eight years; a work which, apart from numerous conversions, has calmed down the most unquiet faubourgs of the city.*

* While I am writing this, Paris has been moved by the news of the death of the Prince Imperial. In former days, an event like this would have been the signal for a Republican illumination, especially in what I may call the "Mission faubourgs." But all has been quiet; and the newspapers specially inform us that attempts to get up these displays in "Belleville and Montmartre have failed; and the lantern sellers went home with their stock unsold."

3. I wish to engage the sympathies of workers at home for their fellow-workers in France, who, amid all their comforting success, have many difficulties to encounter, and much real hardship to undergo.

4. I wish to plead for more labourers. It is self-denying and, in a worldly aspect, unremunerative toil; but not the less on that account ought it to call out the zeal of Christians in our land, especially as it is the nearest and most accessible of all missionary fields. The French Pastors have nobly helped; but they have their own work, which fills their hands.

5. I wish to claim the liberality of those who can give. Mr. M'All's responsibilities are heavy; and Christians at home must step forward to relieve him. The burden, which he has been bearing so uncomplainingly, is becoming too weighty for the shoulders of one man. As conductor of the Mission, and as responsible for the means of carrying it on, he has far too much laid upon him. His position reminds me of the apostle's, as described by himself in 2 Cor. xi. 28,—"Besides those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the Churches;" or, as the words might be more pointedly rendered, "Besides these externals, there is the daily concourse of visitors, and the care

of all the Churches." I need not say that the "daily concourse of visitors" in Paris is a serious thing.

These are my chief reasons for publishing this volume; and I trust it will have due weight with the Christian public, calling forth sympathy, liberality, and prayer.

I have confined myself entirely to Mr. M'All's work, and even of this I have been obliged to write briefly. To know it aright, strangers must see and hear for themselves. They need not think it necessary to address a meeting either in broken French, or through an interpreter. For without this, they can quite appreciate the Mission and understand its workings.

The Grange,
Edinburgh, *June*, 1879.

After I had finished this Preface, I received a letter from M. Saillens regarding the work at Marseilles of date 25th June (1879). The field has only been entered on; but the accounts are cheering. "When we left Paris," he writes, "we hoped and prayed that our efforts at Marseilles might be crowned with success. But we had no idea that God would so richly answer our prayers. In less than three months we had three stations opened, and fourteen meetings a-week established. We saw, in

every station, the halls become too small in a very few weeks; but now our statistics are as follows :—

	Sittings.	Weekly Adults.	Weekly Children.	Bible Classes.	Sewing Meetings.
Belle de Mai,	380	700	130	110	40
Mempenti,	600	1100	275	350	35
Endoume,	160	350	...	...	...
	1140	2150	405	460	75

making more than 3000 per week, an average of 1000 a-station. We have not yet reached the mass of the population. Twenty stations would hardly do it. There is in that vast city of 350,000 inhabitants (all of whom live more outside than at home) an unlimited sphere of labour. The Lord has been gracious in preparing the hearts of the Christian people here to receive us kindly and to help us. Money has been found up to our present needs. These mercies make us sure that He will not refuse to help us onwards and to give us the means of extending considerably the work, which, I am sure, will develop itself. We have not been left without more definite proofs of His approval. A Reformed pastor told me the other day that he had noticed in his church fifty of our people from La Belle de Mai; seven of whom he has admitted lately to the Lord's table. At the Free Church, also, several have been admitted. I have been set aside by sickness and obliged to take some rest. But our friends have well filled my place. May I ask an interest in your prayers? Our two Bible-women are overcharged with work. From all hands; from all cities; almost from every village, there comes the cry of the Macedonian. Oh that we French Christians may rise to the height of our calling."

H. B.

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THE WHITE FIELDS OF FRANCE.

CHAPTER I.

FRAGMENTS OF HISTORY, NEW AND OLD.

THE Italian Government has thrown a new bridge across the Tiber the other day, under the very eye of the Pope, but without asking his leave. The like has not been done for a thousand years and more. The Pontifex Maximus has evidently lost his hold of the old river, as well as of the old city. The king opened the bridge in March last, and no Pope was there; nor bishop, nor cardinal, nor priest. It is the first of five which are to be built; the Pontifex looking down on them helplessly from the Vatican, and nobody asking how he looks or what he says.

The French Government has done something even better and more daring than this. It has authorised the opening of twenty-three places of evangelical service in Paris, without asking permission of Pope or bishop. And no judgment has fallen on the

Republic for so doing. Religious liberty is not fully legalised yet in France; but it makes progress. To a large extent the Word of the Lord has free course and is glorified. Paris is certainly listening to the Gospel; no man forbidding, and not a few rejoicing.

The priesthood has done its best to identify Protestantism with atheism and communism, but things are understood now better than they were; and the French Government has at last learned that Protestantism is the friend of order and peace and morality.* Even the police of Paris have had this truth forced upon them by the events of the last eight years. They are not likely to forget the

* "I have several times heard the fear expressed that the hostility to Roman Catholicism and her ministers, so manifest among the masses, may, after attacking superstition, direct itself against Christianity itself and against vital religion. I will not say that, to some extent, this fear is not justified. Yes, it is unhappily only too true, with many fanatical or unenlightened persons, that the hatred which they have conceived against Romanism, imagining it to represent Christianity, has thrown them into complete scepticism, and led them to cast off all forms of religion. It is, however, a remarkable fact that Romish priests, whatever aversion they have inspired towards themselves and the religion they profess, have not succeeded, if we may so express it, in rendering Christ and His Gospel unpopular, even among the class to which we have just referred. The people dimly realise that these priests are the unfaithful depositaries of a sacred trust. The greatest adversaries of the clergy in our country districts quote, rightly or wrongly, what they know of the Gospel (very little, alas !) in order to condemn their priests by its judgments. These same persons never mention the name of Christ without respect, and one could hardly call them ungodly."—M. RÉVEILLAUD, in *The Catholic Presbyterian.*

lesson taught them by the quiet of Belleville, since evangelical truth found its way into that fierce faubourg, and its poor denizens began to read their Bibles and sing of the love of Christ.

Many of the imprisoned or exiled communists may now be coming back to their homes, in consequence of the late amnesty granted by Government. They were men, like ourselves, though misguided, and exasperated to deeds of violence. Their return to their wives and children and neighbours is an event not to be lost sight of; and they are doubtless wiser men than when they fired the Tuileries and shot the priests. But what will they find on their return? Not the same Belleville at all. Instead of the priest, the pastor; and instead of the inflammatory, seditious placard, the "conférence" bills announcing that some English friends have come to speak to them of the love of Christ.

What does all this mean? Can they believe their own eyes? Is this the faubourg of the Commune? Are these the streets, once smelling with petroleum, and red with blood, and resounding with the cry of massacre? There is a change. And the people too are changed. They are quiet and orderly. No revolutionary shouts are heard. It is still "liberty, equality, and fraternity" that they speak of; but it is not the same kind of liberty

and equality and fraternity. How are they to understand all this? And what can have wrought the change? It cannot be the Church that has done this; for the priests are not to be seen, and Protestant pastors from England walk up and down the steep streets, and are recognised by their old comrades as friends.

Here is a liberated communist entering his own house. Wife and children are still there; but there are strange books and tracts lying about,—Bibles and gospels and hymnals. He sits down. The children gather round him and begin to sing. It is not the Marseillaise, nor any such song of wild liberty. It is something softer, sweeter, and, till this hour, unheard by him,—

"O merveilleuse histoire
De Christ, mon Rédempteur,
Qui, du haut de sa gloire,
Descend pour moi pécheur!"

What is this "history," and who is this "Redeemer," and what does a "sinner" mean? The words, the tune, the young voices that sing, are irresistible. The listener never heard such news before. Are they true? And has he, a poor communist, just come from banishment or out of prison, anything to do with such love as this?

Or perhaps the little ones, still gathered round

their strange-looking father, or brother, and gazing up into his face, begin,—

"Reviens, reviens,
Enfant, parmi les tiens !
Tu chemines dans l'ombre,
Et ta route est bien sombre ;
O pauvre enfant perdu
Reviens, oh, reviens, reviens !"

He comes under a new influence, as he listens and learns. The words fall on him like a spell, which he feels, but cannot explain. He does not yet comprehend the wondrous truths ; but he yields to the power of the scene and the song : they calm and they please. He must learn more about this story of sin and love, human sin and Divine love, that has so changed Belleville. The punishment through which he has passed has only hardened and soured him ; but these hymns now sounding through his old dwelling, they win him from all thoughts of revenge, and make his heart soft as a child's. Again the little voices begin ; and he listens,—

"O bonheur, ô grâce ;
Voici le Sauveur !
Il souffre à la place
Du pauvre pécheur.
Chantons sa victoire,
Élevons la voix ;
Célébrons la gloire
De sa sainte croix."

The "cross!" He sees no cross in their hands, or hanging round their necks, or placed against the walls of his house. Yet they sing of the cross. What cross? Not the old "crucifix," which the priests blessed, which the women kissed, which the dying hugged, and the children knelt before. There is not a crucifix in the house. What "cross" do they mean when they sing of the "glory of the holy cross"? He has all this yet to learn.

Shall we sing you just another "cantique," father? Yes, as many as you like. I could listen all the day long.

"Viens, âme qui pleures
Viens à ton Sauveur;
Dans les tristes heures
Dis-lui ta douleur,
Dis tout bas ta plainte
Au Seigneur Jesus,
Parle-lui sans crainte
Et ne pleure plus."

Sorrow and tears! Yes; communist as he is, he is a man with a human heart, and he has known these. In his dark cell he has wept warm tears; and now, as soon as he returns to his dwelling he hears a voice, as from heaven, telling him what to do with these,—take them to Jesus.

He had heard nothing of all this in prison; he had seen nothing of Belleville since he was led off

in chains, eight years ago, to be tried for treason or for murder; he is released from his fetters; he comes back to his old haunts; the streets and houses are the same; but somehow there is a wondrous difference everywhere. Is he to come under the new influence, or to be just what he was?

He has a history to learn, a blank to fill up in his memory; and he begins to question others as to how all this came about, and to ask himself if it is no prison-dream,—one of the many which so often cheated him in his chains?

When he went to prison he believed nothing; and he knew that the greater part of his fellow-citizens had, like himself, no creed. No God, no Christ, no Bible, no life beyond death,—were the four articles which he would have subscribed, if he would affix his name to anything in the shape of faith or no faith. He finds matters changed.

Death an eternal sleep, and religion an imposture of the priesthood he would subscribe to. For more than a century these had been the watchwords of France, or at least of Paris; and he is surprised to find them not so popular as they used to be. He had despised the Church, not merely as a delusion and an oppression; but because its officials, high and low, made their livelihood by professing a belief which they had not, and ministering at an altar at which in

secret they mocked. He had hated the priests because they had been feasting when the citizens were starving; drinking the finest wines when the thousands about them had only the water of the puddle or the sewer to drink. He finds now springing up among his old comrades a religion in which there is no insincerity, nor self-pampering. The old religion, he thought, was crushed, when the priests were shot at Haxo, and the archbishop in his dungeon. But here is a new religion beginning to supplant it; and what is more remarkable,—here is *faith* venturing to raise its head,—faith which the goddess of reason had long since destroyed.

And the faith which he finds is evidently real. It may be fanaticism, but it is not superstition; it may be foolishness, but it is not hypocrisy. The men who say they believe are simple and earnest. They make no gain by their creed, and they do not lord it over others, but are gentle and loving. They speak to one another of that which no priest nor bishop ever spoke,—the love of Christ, and the free pardon of sin. Their pastors, too, are affable and kind, taking no money from the flock, but gladly giving, and helping, and comforting. Their churches, too, are not cathedrals, gaudy with tinselled splendour, and ministered in by men dressed in the cast-off clothes of Pagan Rome; but simple rooms, enlarged

by the removal of partitions;—at the best, halls, of moderate size; with no stained windows, nor marble statues, nor gilded rails, nor fretted roof, nor oaken stalls, nor groined arches, nor massive pillars, nor mosaic floors;—most of them old shops whitewashed and brushed up for the occasion;—which, in the simplicity of their furniture speak of the simplicity of the worship, and, in the bold calico placards with their bright texts all over the clean walls, make known beyond mistake the creed here taught,—the sin of man and the grace of God:—death through sin, and life through the Sinbearer, the Son of God.*

The priesthood is still in existence; but it is in abeyance,—the priests are nowhere, the pastor is everywhere. Yet the word "Protestantism" is never heard;—can this be Protestantism? What does "the Gospel" mean? What does "evangelical" mean? What are these "réunions," these "conférences,"

* Some have been heard condemning such room-gatherings or shop-meetings as dishonouring to religion. With them the "dim religious light" and the "long-drawn aisle" is everything, and these bright rooms with their white walls and outshining texts are not only poor but discreditable. These complaints are not new, either in France or in England. In the life of the famous William Grimshaw we are told that when that zealous clergyman began his cottage meetings, he was denounced by the neighbouring clergy as doing that which was "a dishonour to God and tending to bring religion into contempt" (*Life*, p. 53).

which the Government so pleasantly recognise, and countenance without limit? No angry men mount the platform to stir up the passions of the people, by reminding them of their poverty and bondage, of the inequality of ranks, and the arrogance of the rich. The speaker does not declaim against priests, or masses, or processions, or fêtes. He preaches what he calls "good news;" and these good news seem somehow most wonderfully to melt and yet to calm the audience; they are all about a love of which he had never heard before, of which no priest had ever spoken; and about a joy which he had not even so much as imagined could exist in connection with religion at all. He hears the words "free pardon,"—what does that mean? He hears of the "deliverance of the captive,"—what does that mean? And as he listens to the simple prayers, he says, Surely this man does believe in a God, and has a Father in heaven, to whom he speaks, and who speaks to him. And that Book from which he reads, and which he calls the Word of God,—how simple, how loving, yet how searching are all its utterances! He will inquire into these things which so many of his old companions have adopted. What if they are all true? Perhaps there is a God, and a Christ, and a Bible, and a state of endless joy or sorrow.

He goes up to one of these evangelists or pastors and asks if he really believes all he preaches?

"I do," says the earnest man.

"You seem to do so certainly, but as the priests do not believe what they say, I thought you might be only assuming the earnestness which you show."

"I believe every word that I have spoken."

"And is all that you have said really true?"

"I am assured that it is; for I have read it from the Book of Him who cannot lie."

"You are aware that the priests do not believe?"

"I am; but what difference does that make to you or me?"

"None; only I thought you did not know this."

"I know it too well. A friend of mine called for a church-dignitary whom he knew, and some such conversation as the following took place:—

"'Now that we are alone,' said the man of office, 'let us speak freely. Forget that you are a pastor, and I'll forget that I am a priest.'

"'What then?'

"'Oh! you know I believe nothing, and you believe nothing; we preach only to deceive the people.'

"'Pardon me; it is not so: I believe from the heart all I say; do you really not?'

"'I am ashamed of myself,' said the prelate sadly, and with downcast face.

"So you see, my good friend," resumed the pastor to the communist, "I know the priesthood well. But their unbelief does not shake my faith. I do believe the glad tidings that I preach; and in believing them I have been made inexpressibly happy; and I want you to be the same."

Thus the poor communist is made somewhat to understand that during these years of his imprisonment or exile strange things have been doing and strange words spoken in Paris. The elements of storm have almost disappeared. It would not be easy to get up a revolution in Belleville now; and besides, if all that he sees and hears is true, there is no need of one. These pastors with their new doctrines are doing what barricades and petroleum could not effect. They are changing the face of society; producing liberty; and bringing all classes of the community together as brethren. There is a battle still; but it is not the old one between unbelief and credulity,—that is, between atheism and Rome; it is between unbelief and *faith;*—the new *faith,* if it is to be called so, the faith which has a great deal to say for itself, even to a communist.

And then there is this Bible which everybody is reading. How has it come to supplant Voltaire,

and to take such hold of men's minds? Where did it come from, and how has it penetrated into the homes of Belleville, so that even the children read it, and grey-headed infidels are not ashamed to listen?

And the police,—how is it that they are so civil at all these meetings,—coming not as spies, but as friends and protectors? In former days every gathering was either altogether prohibited or closely watched, and all names taken down and reported to Government. Ask them, and they will tell you how this new religion has lightened their work, and quieted one district after another; they will tell you how their superiors are interested in all that is going on, and every functionary of Government sustains them in their protection of these new pastors. They will tell you that twice over has the chief pastor received public thanks for his labours; and two medals of honour from two of the great public societies of the city.*

* "I should not do justice to this subject were I not to speak of the disposition shown by those now in power. The Ministry, as you know, is almost half Protestant numerically, and more than half in spirit and in politics. You know, also, what a careful distinction the leader of the Republican party, M. Gambetta, made between the different Churches in his speech at Romans, when putting the question of the agreement existing between the Churches and the State. The prefects, too, are inspired with this liberal spirit, and although liberty for religious meetings is not yet written in our laws, they make no difficulty in granting the necessary authorisations for meet-

How has all this come to pass? he asks in amazement. He is not long in getting an answer. He learns that a stranger came to Paris from England some years since; spoke lovingly to the people, and won their hearts; put into their hands books which he called gospels; opened halls of instruction, and taught both young and old to sing those hymns to which he has been listening.

It is of this stranger and his work that I have undertaken to write; and he who reads what follows will see how closely these introductory remarks bear upon my narrative.

In August, 1871, Mr. M'All visited Paris; in January, 1872, he commenced his first meeting in Belleville; and now, in 1879, he has twenty-three stations in Paris, and four in Lyons. The work has prospered beyond all thought; and the sphere has been widening year after year.

ings and lectures. At the time that my pamphlet ("La Question Religieuse") was condemned in Rome, it obtained from the Minister of the Interior the colportage stamp—that is to say, authority to be freely distributed by booksellers and colporteurs. In a word, Protestantism has never found a more favourable opportunity for propagandism. With such liberty for going about, speaking, circulating Bibles and controversial pamphlets, united to the living faith which animated them, what would not the reformers of the sixteenth century have accomplished! And what shall not we, their unworthy descendants, accomplish, if we raise again the old standard and hold by the glorious traditions of their zeal and activity!" - M. RÉVEILLAUD, in *The Catholic Presbyterian.*

His first visit was for recreation, his second was the inauguration of earnest work. He did not know, when he went to refresh himself after the fatigues of pastoral duty in England, that it was to receive a call to labour in France that he had gone. While he was purposing one thing, God was preparing another. Hadleigh with its 4000 inhabitants was to be exchanged for Paris with its two millions; and the four days' sojourn in the French capital, as a passing traveller, was to be the providential link in the accomplishment of this exchange.

It is on our *journeys* that God so often meets us, and gives us new directions, or entrusts us unexpectedly with a new commission: deranging all former plans, and sending us on an errand, perhaps the very last that we could have expected to be sent upon. Of many others besides Paul it may be told how they had *seen* the Lord *in the way*, and that He had spoken to them (Acts ix. 7). Of the peculiar turns and changes in a good man's life, this is the only true account that can be given,—"Jacob went on his way, and the angels of God *met* him" (Gen. xxxii. 1).

Out of such a "seeing" and such a "meeting" the present work arose. The things in it called by us "accidents" were parts of God's purpose of favour to a city where Atheism and Romanism

had hitherto held unquestioned sway; where crime and lust and ungodliness overflowed in every faubourg and street.

Paris was about the unlikeliest place for such a mission, and the last town in Europe for which blessing might have been expected. Moralists regarded it as the focus, or rather arsenal, of wickedness and desperate outrage. Statesmen spoke of it as the crater of a great volcano. Apocalyptic interpreters pointed it out as the likeliest scene of the vials of Divine vengeance. Christian men mourned over it as hopeless and inaccessible to the Gospel,—wholly given to pleasure and frivolity.

To appreciate the enterprise, one must remember the nature of the field entered on. The enormous obstructions can only be properly understood by those who have lived in, and known the city, or studied the histories of the French Revolution, in which the state of the people,—moral, social, and political,—is described, as a sort of necessary introduction to the story of the revolution-crimes. The first three books of Carlyle's History may be most instructively read in connection with,—I had almost said as a preface to,—the story of the M'All Mission; and any one who has dipped into that strange romance, "The Mysteries of Paris," by Eugene Sue, will not wonder that we should speak

of that metropolis as the most hopeless and inaccessible of all mission-fields. A chapter of any of the above works, placed side by side with one of Mr. M'All's reports, will give a reader some idea of how much faith and Christian bravery were required, to attempt or even to project such an enterprise.

But the truth is, in all great works God never leaves it with man to *project* the scheme, or to *forecast* the issues. He leads the chosen man to the entrance; and without telling him whether the work is great or little, easy or arduous, He says, —"There is thy work, do it: form no ambitious plans, nor get up some great organisations, but do the work before thee, asking no questions. The rest will follow: the work is mine, not thine; be not careful about the means or the issue."

The hopelessness of religious work in Paris was the sad but settled conviction of some of our most devoted Christian men: of those especially who knew it best and remembered its past history. It was the city which had quenched the Reformation with blood in the days of Calvin. It was the centre of the St. Bartholomew massacre, and of the revolution which at the close of last century horrified Europe with its atrocities. It was the city of the Guises and the Bourbons, the city of Robespierre and Danton, the city which of all others seemed

most to have fought against God,—against Christ and His Gospel. No wonder that men despaired of it. Can any good thing come out of Paris? Can any good thing get into it?

Yet in the annals of that Capital there are many scenes of brightness, and names of holy zeal. It was the city of Margaret of Navarre, sister of Francis I., and friend of Calvin; of her who for so long shielded the Reformation and held fellowship with the Reformers, and who, when wearied with Paris, St. Germaine, and Fontainebleau, thus wrote:—

"Adieu! pomps, vanities, adieu,
No longer commune I with you.
Other pleasures seek I none
But my Bridegroom's love alone;
Honour, riches, all my store
Is in Jesus evermore.
For the fleeting and the vain
Shall I give the eternal gain?
Adieu! Adieu!"

It was the city, too, of the noble Berquin, in whom the Protestants had hoped to see the Reformer of France, who was hurried to the burning pile lest the king should revoke the sentence; of Joubert, the martyr; of Marot, the sweet singer; and Toussain, the young prebendary of Metz; and Nicholas Doullon, who was burnt alive in front of Notre Dame, refusing to "apologise to the Virgin" for not giving her

divine honours; and De la Tour, who, being charged with having sowed Lutheran errors not only in Paris, but in Edinburgh, where he had been with the Duke of Albany, was burnt at the pig-market; and the poor nameless *Christaudin* of Meaux, who suffered on the *Grêve* of Paris; and the peasant of Rieux, Denis by name, who, after the efforts of his torturers to make him deny his Lord had proved vain, was condemned to the hurdle, the stake, the flame; and Stephen Renier, the cordelier, who died confessing Christ in the fire; and Jonas, the learned schoolmaster of Annonay, who, with twenty-five fellow-witnesses, was sent to starve in prison by the Archbishop of Vienne. It was the city of the high-born Coligny, whose grey hairs could not save him from the poniard of Besme and the kicks of Guise; of Condé, and Rouillard, and Teligny, and of a host of brave, pious, learned men, some of whom were spared, but most of whom perished by the sword of assassins, instigated to their desperate work of murder by the princes of the realm, and by the bishops and priests of Rome.

These are some specimens of French martyrdom which, amid much that is unhopeful, bid us hope for the land where Christ had witnesses of old, so many, so bold, so true.

I had thought of giving some further examples of the "noble army of martyrs" in France, to interest

and to cheer the Christian friends connected with the present Mission; but this would lead me too far aside from my main purpose. I have written enough to show what a storehouse of noble names and noble deeds the religious history of that land contains.

There is another portion of church history which I should much have liked to take up in connection with our present hopes and fears for France. I mean the relation in which it stood with reference to other countries at the time of the Reformation. A reader of French history is greatly struck with this, and wonders as he sees what a centre Paris was at that time for the preachers of the truth, and what a helping hand oftentimes France held out to the persecuted of other countries, even in the midst of her own sufferings. "God is not unrighteous to forget her work and labour of love, in that she ministered to the saints," and received those who were cast out by the hostile Romanism of Europe.

Not only Germany, Bohemia, and Switzerland; but Spain, Italy, and England received help from her, and were by her helped in return.

Let me give a specimen of what I mean, in a page or two, which I would call "A Scottish Chapter of Old French History." It will interest, I think, the friends of the "M'All Mission," especially when

they remember that the head of that mission is himself a Scot by descent.

Scotland and France were at one time special friends. Nor was it the Reformation that broke the relationship, but the brutal violence of the Guises and the subserviency of Mary Queen of Scots to their plots for the overthrow of Scottish liberty.

Even the bloodshed of St. Bartholomew's day did not wholly detach Protestant Scotland from her ancient ally; for long afterwards we find the intercourse between the two countries maintained: and the Presbyterian ministers of the North, banished by James VI. from their native land, took refuge in France, and preached the Gospel there.

One notable instance of this I select, as showing not only the intimacy between the two nations, but the religious bond between French and Scottish Protestantism.

John Welsh, minister of Ayr, with five companions, fled to France to escape the anger of the Scottish king. On the 7th of November, 1606, early in the morning, they set sail from Leith, on the sands of which, in the dark of a wintry storm, friends from many parts had gathered together, to pray, to sing the 23rd Psalm, and to bid farewell. They set sail for the south of France, and landed at Bordeaux.

Within fourteen weeks after his arrival, Welsh was able to preach in French, and was called to exercise his ministry, first at Nerac, then at Jonsack, and then at Saint Jean d'Angely, where he remained about sixteen years, much to the comfort and benefit of the Reformed Church of France; though he himself was ill at ease, and writes home to his friends of his discomforts; while the records of the Synod of St. Maisant in 1609 show that his ecclesiastical superiors sometimes drew the bridle too tightly for his free northern spirit.

Tradition says that though he made such progress in French speaking, he sometimes forgot his rules and accents. When expounding scripture or stating doctrine his language was exact. But when he proceeded to the warmth of exhortation and appeal, he was apt "to neglect the accuracy of the French construction." Some excellent young Frenchmen endeavoured to set him right, "which he took in very good part," arranging with them that they were to watch him carefully, and at the least grammatical impropriety, give him a sign of his deviation by standing up. How often these careful friends had to rise we are not told. But we are informed that he took the utmost possible care, "not only to deliver good matter, but to recommend it in neat expression." His anxiety to produce

perfect French is an example to our modern Scotch and English workers in the mission-field. Politeness may keep a foreigner from smiling at our idioms, but not the less is the effect of the address marred by inaccuracy. It would appear that 270 years ago, the young men of France were a little particular, perhaps fastidious. It is not less so now.

While he preached to the peasantry of France in their villages, he preached also before the University of Saumur, "with boldness and authority," and was called frequently to address an auditory in which there were "persons of great quality." It was on one of these occasions that Boyd of Trochrig asked how he could be so bold in such circumstances, and received the memorable answer, that in preaching the Word of God he was "so filled with dread of God that he had no fear of man at all."

While he was minister in one of the French villages, a friar came to his house asking to be lodged for the night. He was kindly entertained, and had a bedroom assigned to him adjoining that of the minister. Happening to awake during the night, he heard a continuous whispering, which troubled him not a little, ascribing it to evil spirits haunting the Protestant house. Walking abroad next day, a peasant saluted him and asked him how he did.

"Where lodged you last night?"

"With the Huguenot minister," said the friar.

"What sort of entertainment had you?" asked the peasant.

"Very bad. I always believed that these Huguenot houses were haunted; but I never proved it till last night. There was a continual whisper in the room next mine; and I am sure it was the devil and the minister talking together."

"You are far mistaken," said the peasant; "it was the minister at his night-prayers."

"What! does the minister pray?"

"Yes, more than any man in France; and if you will stay another night, you may make sure."

The friar returned to the Huguenot house and begged lodging for another night, which was at once granted. "Before dinner," says the old narrative, "Mr. Welsh came down from his chamber and made his family exercise according to his wont. He sang a psalm; he read a portion of Scripture, commenting on it; and then prayed." The friar looked and listened with astonishment. Dinner was then served, and the friar was kindly entertained; the good Huguenot minister asking no questions and entering on no disputes. The evening came, and with it the "evening exercise," quite like that of the morning, to the friar's yet greater wonder. They supped and went to bed. But the friar was resolved to keep

awake and hear the strange sounds which he had heard the night before. He then went and put his ear to the door to satisfy himself as to what the sound really was. "Then," writes the old biographer, "he heard not only the sound but the very words; and in these words communications between man and God such as he had never believed to be in this world." The day broke, and Mr. Welsh came out of his room. The friar went to him, bewailed his ignorance, and asked instruction. Kindly did the minister receive him; bidding him welcome in the name of God, and showing him the true light which had been so long hidden from him. That light entered his soul, and in it he walked till his dying hour.

Louis XII. made war upon the Protestants, to extirpate the faith; and besieged the town of Rochelle. Encouraged by the Scotch Huguenots, the citizens resisted to the utmost, and by their bravery secured honourable terms when at last induced to yield. Welsh seems to have been the leading spirit in the siege; and when the king entered the city, Welsh preached as before, without asking permission, to the great offence of the court. While the sermon was proceeding the king sent the Duke d'Espernon to fetch him out of the pulpit into his presence. The duke went with his guard; as

he entered, Welsh commanded the people to give way and set a seat for him. The duke sat down and listened gravely to the end, when he ordered Welsh to accompany him to the king, which he did willingly. The king, in anger, asked why he had not interrupted the minister. "Never man spake like this man," was the reply; "but here he is to answer for himself."

The offender was brought in; and as soon as he entered, kneeled down to ask Divine wisdom.

"How dare you preach here," said the king; "seeing it is against the laws of France that any man should preach within the verge of the court?"

"Sire," said the brave Scotchman, "if you would do the right thing you would come and hear me preach; nay, and cause all France to come and hear me; for I preach not as these men do whom you are in the wont of hearing."

"How?" said the king.

"I preach that you must be saved by the merits of Christ, not by your own. I preach, too, that as you are King of France, you are not under the authority of man. These men who are about you would make you subject to the Pope of Rome, which I will never do."

"Eh, bien, vous seriez mon ministre," said the well-pleased monarch.

Welsh was favourably dismissed, instead of being punished; and the king left the city in peace.

Soon after Welsh left France for London, where he died, after having for sixteen years sowed, in many places throughout France, the seed of everlasting life.

This link between France and Scotland was only one out of many that could be exhibited; but if it tend to draw Scottish eyes and hearts to the great work now going on in a land which was once our ally when England was our foe, I shall not have given the narrative in vain.

France is not hopeless; Paris is not inaccessible to the Gospel. The priesthood of other ages have done their worst to darken and enslave; their hands are feeble now; they hate, but they cannot imprison, or strangle, or burn, or assassinate.

Carlyle, in his mystical narrative of the Revolution, calls the Pope "the Supreme Quack." It would have been well for France had he been no more than this. He was the supreme wrong-doer and spoiler. What a land might she have been had he let her alone, and not drenched her in innocent blood, and shut out the Bible from her millions.

That same writer adds, "The first of all gospels is this, that a lie cannot endure for ever." Of this we are not so sure. It may at least endure long enough

to ruin a nation; and though he tells us that "a lie cannot be believed," we know how it has been believed, and also that it is written, "God shall send them strong delusion that they should believe a lie." But when he writes that "in the huge mass of evil, as it rolls and swells, there is some good working imprisoned, working towards deliverance and triumph," we gladly accept the dictum in measure, only we prefer to put it in another form,—that "where sin has abounded, there grace did much more abound."

Germany is sinking into scepticism. Is France emerging from it? We do not hear indeed that "a great company of the priests have become obedient to the faith;" but there are indications that some of the French apostles of unbelief are in earnest, asking, "What is truth?" They are beginning to feel the sorrows of negativism; and are coming to the conclusion that the absence of truth is a wrong to their souls: that, as all unbelief is the belief of a lie, they have, while boasting that they believed nothing, been believing a thousand lies.*

* "Our people do not become Protestants, because it is not the custom, because they fear to be peculiar, because they dread what may be said in their district or village; doubtless, also, because strong conviction would be necessary, and they have only a vague sympathy. But when a Catholic comes out of his Church and attaches himself to a Protestant congregation, though some of his

Clericalism is not in the ascendant in France. Its frantic efforts to convulse the nation in order to win a victory for itself have failed. The intrigues of the priesthood have been unveiled and baffled. Plots and miracles, effrontery and cunning, have missed their aim. Legitimacy, Orleanism, and Imperialism have done their worst. The reaction has been a feeble thing. Old dynasties, like broken columns, will not resuscitate. Still less will old religions. These have no resurrection. They crumble, or rather rot; and, from their corruption, send up foul growths; but they themselves rise not again. True religions have often revived; the false never.

It is this that makes the present efforts for evangelising France so momentous and so critical. Now is the moment for the Gospel to strike in and do its work. Souls, tired of atheism, contemptuous of Popery, sick of pleasure, are asking, Who will show us any good? God is answering the cry of the weary and the empty, and sending to them that

neighbours may perhaps censure him, the majority will approve, and feel a secret desire to follow his example. It is most certain that prominent political men, like Messrs. Turquet Malézieux, Jules Favre, Paul Bouchard, &c., who have formally adhered to Protestantism, have not found the sympathies of their electors diminished because of their abjuration of Roman Catholicism. On the contrary, the last elections proved that the confidence of their constituents had increased."—M. RÉVEILLAUD.

which alone can refresh and fill,—the glad tidings of His own free love manifested in the cross of His Son, the Christ of God. After a whole century of political and religious unrest, the cry for rest is coming up, and the gospel of rest is now meeting this cry.

These homely halls, in which that gospel is preached, suit far better the present work of proclaiming rest to the weary, than any large and splendid structure could do. The sorrows of a spirit, seeking peace, what have they to do with the artificial and the garish? Cathedral gloom represents no divine idea; while the clear pleasant light of these unadorned rooms is of itself cheery and comforting. Architects and painters have been in all ages the corrupters of heavenly truths. The false creed or cult they have beautified; the true creed they have distorted and degraded. But here neither Greek nor Gothic art intrudes. The halls and the hymns and the company suit each other well; and even beauty-loving Paris will not deem this homeliness out of place, nor think that some Madeleine or Notre Dame would have comported better with the message or the messenger.

There was an artist who painted the first supper; but he painted the cups so exquisitely that the gazer's eye rested on them, and not on the Master.

Seeing this, he brushed off the cups, that "Jesus only" might be seen. Many a church and many a sermon have been to the audience what these cups were. Instead of "producing religious feeling," they have hid or obscured the Lord.

Paris is now having a new lesson taught her,—that sculpture and painting, that temples and cathedrals, that processions and fêtes are not religion; that portraits and statues and crucifixes and relics and madonnas are not Christ; nay, that they lead the heart away from Him; and that there is such a thing as acceptable devotion without an altar, or an image, or an earthly priest, —yes, such a thing as "worshipping Him who is a Spirit, in spirit and in truth;"—a truth which the nations of Europe have yet to learn.

CHAPTER II.

RISE OF THE WORK.

I MUST return to the visit of the English stranger referred to in my previous chapter.

I have ventured on a long episode, but by no means a needless one, though, perhaps, it may not seem to others so indispensable as it does to myself. For my object in this little volume is not merely to call attention to a modern mission, but to awaken a fervent and intelligent interest in the religious history of a noble country. Having as briefly as possible sketched this outline, I proceed with my main narrative.

The quarter of Paris known by the name of Belleville was originally outside the city walls or Boulevards, but now forms the north-eastern part of the city, the circle of fortifications having been so widened as to embrace this suburb or *faubourg*, as it is called. It contains a population of about 100,000.

Though inhabited by the poorest classes, it is the most elevated in situation, and about the healthiest quarter of the town. It commands an extensive view on most sides, though not by any means so wide as that from our own Calton Hill or Castle rock, here in Edinburgh.

The houses in general are inferior, and the streets narrow; the latter very roughly paved, and the former rising to several storeys in height, with something like what we call a "common stair" as the entrance to the whole. In a small room at the foot of this stair dwells the *concierge* or porter, who takes charge of the outer door, and is responsible for the flats above.*

The character of the district for poverty and crime is so well known in Paris, that the railway officials wonder at so many English parties, on their arrival at the station from the north, inquiring the way to Belleville; and our cabman, when told to drive to Belleville, asked seriously if we really knew the quarter of the city we were going to.

From being built on a considerable eminence, this faubourg presents slopes of sometimes rather formidable steepness in its different thoroughfares,

* There are no less than 50,000 of these porters in Paris, to each of whom a lady has proposed to offer a copy of the New Testament. Upwards of 10,000 of these have been already distributed and gratefully received.

which the omnibus surmounts, but which the tramway declines to attempt. A very large amount of misery, poverty, and sin is concentrated here;* and from the dens with which its lanes abound went forth the communists or levellers, who with liberty, equality, and fraternity on their banners, once sought to sweep away not only rank, but property, going out through the city as murderers, or incendiaries. Soured against the wealthy, and enraged against a priesthood who never approached them but for money, and who during the great siege were feeding luxuriously when they were starving, or sustained in life upon the vermin of the common sewers, they struck right and left when their opportunity came. Nor could any one say that their provocation had not been great, though their revenge was terrible.

Not far from one of the present mission-stations is the street Haxo. Passing the foot of it one day, and seeing the name written very legibly at the corner, we asked a soldier whom we met, where the slaughter of the priests took place. He pointed to the highest part of the *Rue*, some three or four hundred yards off. We followed his directions, and found ourselves in front of a large garden with an

* Yet not far off, a little to the south, is the celebrated cemetery of Père Lachaise; and still nearer, and forming part of Belleville itself, we have the *Buttes Chaumont*, one of the finest parks to be found in any European city.

iron gate; and looking through the bars, we saw, at the further end, a wall,—a blackened wall,—with an inscribed stone. Into that garden numbers of the priests of Paris were brought by the exasperated communists; to that wall they were fastened and shot. It must have been a dreadful scene of blood and butchery. The men of Belleville were the perpetrators of it. Awfully was that blood avenged by the Government, when the army of Versailles burst in upon the city and bore down the wretched communists. All then was massacre and fury. Hundreds of them, men and women, were shot down in the streets, and hundreds more were carried off to prison, to be tried, condemned, and executed or exiled. Five hundred were, in one mass, hurried off to Père Lachaise, placed upon the edge of a long deep ditch, shot down by the soldiers, and then buried there.

No excuse can be offered for the communists save their ignorance, and the provocations received in days past from an unsympathising aristocracy and an unfeeling priesthood. That their passions broke loose, and found vent to themselves in the destruction of those whom they knew to be their worst enemies, was only what might be expected of men who were profoundly ignorant both of religion and morality, and who had been kept in this ignorance

by those who ought to have taught them, out of the Bible, the principles of true liberty, true equality, and true fraternity. The poor degraded men were mostly atheists, and had been driven into atheism by a priesthood whose lies had become transparent, whose licentiousness was notorious, and whose indifference to the wants of their fellow-men was a thing not attempted to be concealed. The retribution upon the priesthood was cruel, but it was too well deserved.

What self-restraint could be expected from ignorant, excited men, who had been goaded first into atheism, and then into despair? They needed teaching, and they got none from their priests. They needed the gospel, and they were mocked with mummeries and demands for money. They needed the example of a holy, loving life, and they saw nothing but selfishness and wickedness. "Ah," said one of them to one of Mr. M'All's missionaries, "had you been here some years ago, there would have been no insurrection, and no bloodshed." In those awful scenes of slaughter, Protestants and Protestant ministers were left unhurt and untouched, for even in their blind fury these unhappy men knew who were their oppressors and who were their friends.

It is among these that Mr. M'All's remarkable

work has been going on these seven years past; by which, and by other kindred efforts, the aspect of the district has been changed, and the lion transformed into the lamb; so that, during the political excitement in Paris in the summer of 1877, all was quiet at Belleville.

Mr. M'All is a genuine Scotchman by descent, and delights to make mention of his Highland ancestry as Celts of the Hebrides, and for ages having had their dwelling in the lonely island of Coll, almost due west of the larger and better known island of Mull, off the Argyleshire coast.

His father was the well-known Dr. M'All of Manchester, noted for his genius, his piety, and his eloquence. The son was the minister of a Congregational church in Lancashire; and here our story begins,—and it begins something like that of the Apostle Paul in Greece of old. There was no vision, certainly—no man of Paris, like that of Macedonia, saying, "Come over and help us;" but there was something not less explicit and remarkable.

Happening to be in Paris soon after the war, he went into a café shortly before leaving. He was distributing tracts at the door, and Mrs. M'All in the inside. A workman grasped his hand and said, "Will you not come and tell us the true religion?" These words were enough. They clung to Mr.

M'All as he journeyed home; and as he pondered them, he could not help recognising in them a message from God to come over and help these poor Parisians. He severed his home ties, and, with his zealous and indefatigable partner, took up his abode in Belleville, in the very midst of these strange communists, whom everybody dreaded. He was entreated not to throw himself into danger; he was warned against communistic violence; he was told that his life was not safe. But he had, in the strength of God, resolved to face the great work, and he had counted the cost; so he took up his abode in that poor district, and threw himself for missionary work among those men and women whose hands were yet red with blood.

He hired a room for a hall, sent out his invitations, and gathered round him soon a goodly number of these outcasts, eager to hear his words and to listen to the hymns he sung to them—hymns which seem to be to the men and women of that district what the Marseillaise was in other days, rousing and quickening them, not to martial deeds or works of violence, but to wonder at the unknown love of which they speak, the new religion which they embody, and the glad tidings which they proclaim.

In the autumn of 1872 Mr. M'All read a paper

at the meeting of the Congregational Union of England and Wales, giving his own narrative of the beginning of his work. It is very brief, occupying only eight printed pages, but it is to us a singularly interesting document: very modest, with no self-obtrusion; yet ample enough to give the reader a full idea of the work. From this we mean to quote largely; both because of its excellence, and also to prevent the paper from being lost sight of. As it is not generally known, I am sure that the reprint will be most acceptable.

"I wish to speak of our work with great caution. The political and moral state of France, and, above all, of its metropolis, beset such an enterprise with peculiar difficulties. Where the travesty of Christianity has driven multitudes to the extreme of atheism; where, consequently, reckless self-indulgence goes hand-in-hand with hatred of the misused name of religion, the attempt to testify for truth and Christ involves trials of patience and courage. Our ambition has been to act as pioneers; by Almighty help to clear a few spots of the thorn-infested ground, and to scatter therein the good seed of eternal life. We therefore would present our enterprise only in the light of *an essay*, the hidden results of which rest with our Master.

"How were we led to undertake it? In August, 1871, Mrs. M'All and I made a first visit of three or four days to Paris. No thought was more remote than that of quitting friends and country in order to become workers in France. The eager reception of the tracts we offered, first impressed us. At that period the populace, fresh from heart-rending disasters, seemed specially responsive to any manifestation of kind feeling. We would not leave the city until we had taken tracts into the heart

of the artisan district—Belleville. We contrived to meet the workmen as they returned homeward at night. At the corner of two great thoroughfares a large group gathered round us. One intelligent man, who could speak a little English, stood forward, and asked if I were not a Christian minister. Then, very earnestly, he spoke to this effect—'Sir, I have something to tell you. Throughout this whole district, containing tens of thousands of *ouvriers*, we have, to a man, done with the priests. We cannot accept an *imposed* religion. But if any one would come to teach us religion of another kind, a religion of freedom and reality, many of us are ready for it.' As we retired, the voices of the people might be heard,—'Bons Anglais! Bons Anglais!'

"Such words, uttered on such a spot, could not be forgotten. Whence should these inquiries after truth be met? Had the devoted Christians of Paris resources sufficient to cover these neglected districts with effort? Was it possible that English or American workers would have advantage for gaining the popular ear in consequence of their palpable freedom from political complications! Could this, so unexpected, be a *call* to break the ties of home, pastorate, and country, and to gird on the missionary harness for the bold essay?

"Months of anxious consideration followed. Correspondence with experienced Christian labourers in Paris, especially with our kind friend Dr. Fisch, brought us to decision. The work would, doubtless, be difficult and arduous: yet it was viewed as practicable. Our friends at Hadleigh, to our unspeakable comfort, came to give full weight to the motive constraining us to the pain of leaving them. Gladly devoting our small private resources in order to give ourselves quite freely to the enterprise, we betook ourselves, nearly a year ago, to the great foreign city, and fixed our residence in Belleville, among the workmen.

"After spending two months in study of the language, and in countless preliminary arrangements (searching out suitable localities, obtaining the necessary authorisation from the Pre-

fecture, &c.), we, with the new year, opened our first mission-room, that in Belleville. On the day of our first meeting, the Commissary of Police for the district, though cordially approving our object, expressed his fear, that in consequence of the prevailing disposition to mock at religion, we should be unable to go forward. The worst spot in St. Giles's, London, he said, would be far more easily worked.

"With trembling hand we opened our door. At first the people seemed to hesitate and pass by. The little company, however, numbered forty. There was no molestation. Our hopes began to revive. At the next meeting (Sunday evening), the place was quite filled, more than 100 being present. Our friend the Commissary attended, saw all things orderly and quiet, and helped to sing the hymns. I may mention that in all arrangements with the municipal and police authorities of Paris, we have been most politely treated. Two styled our work 'an apostolate;' another said, 'Bonne chance à votre charitable enterprise.' Two well-attended services per week, besides a fortnightly children's meeting, have been regularly held in the Belleville room ever since."

All this is what men call "an experiment;" but it was the experiment of faith. Here is a believing man, and his like-minded wife, setting about a work of which it was impossible to estimate the success, or fully to count the cost. It must be all committed to God; and it must be gone about in His strength, with the assured consciousness that the cause was His. It was not human philanthropy setting up some benevolent institution to civilise or soften or subdue a people that had hitherto set all benevolences, as well as all sternnesses at defiance; but it

was faith attempting the impossible in the name of the Lord of Hosts.

Will God fail His trusting servant? Will He leave him to his own resources, and allow him, unhelped, to fight his own battle? Will He give him a settlement in Belleville,—that faubourg of 100,000 communists? Will He gather in the strange crowd from their strange dwellings, from which they have so often issued to shed blood? And will He not only give him Belleville, but open doors for him in in other places? To such questions as these Mr. M'All's answer is as follows :—

"The interest evidenced at Belleville encouraged us to extend our operations. After careful inquiries and some experiments, we increased our stations to four. We opened that of Ménilmontant (close by the celebrated cemetery of Père Lachaise) at the end of February. Our little room was thronged from the first day. We have been obliged to hire a larger one, and that also is crowded. It is a cheering sight, as the men in their white or blue blouses enter, often accompanied by their wives and children, and sit down attentively to read until the meeting shall commence.

"In April we opened a third station, at Charonne, close by the Place du Trône, in a spot noted for irreligion in every shape. Patience and forbearance have been tested there. But we now have a number of earnest listeners ; and the insufficient accommodation renders a larger room necessary, which we expect to open on our return.

"Our fourth station, on the new Boulevard Ornano, Montmartre, amidst a dense mass of superior artisans, was also opened in April. At the outset, determined efforts were made

by representatives of the ultra-atheistic party to interrupt us there. We were also 'written down' in newspaper articles. These men wished to assert that religion and liberty cannot co-exist, that the name of Christ is but a symbol of tyranny, &c. &c. While this opposition lasted, we had the expressed sympathy not only of Protestants of all communities, but of several liberal-hearted Roman Catholics. My valued friend, the Rev. Théodore Monod, and others, aided me to answer these cavils, and ere long the interruption ceased. Every Monday evening, from the beginning, the room, accommodating 150 or more, has been densely thronged, the workmen forming a large majority in the audience. At this station we have also an English service, undertaken at the request of a small colony of Englishmen chiefly connected with the gas-works.

"Including two children's gatherings, eleven meetings are held every week. All these are continued as usual, by the aid of various friends, during our brief absence."

The meeting-places are not of the grand order; rather poor and peculiar; but clean and well lighted. Sometimes too narrow and awkwardly shaped both for speaking and hearing; projecting angles and wooden beams marring all architectural symmetry; they still are quite sufficient for their purpose, and well situated for drawing an audience, especially of the humbler classes. Unornamented certainly they are, save as respects the texts of framed calico, beautifully executed, of green and white or blue, that hang all round, and act as silent preachers. We give Mr. M'All's account of them:—

"All our stations are *shops*, and consequently on the track of

the passers-by. Three are on wide boulevards. The rental of these, with incidental expenses and simple fittings, involves a heavy outlay. Friends in London, Manchester, Sunderland, Leicester, Hadleigh, &c., together with some generous-hearted Christians in Paris (including Dr. Monod and others), also several American visitors from New York, who most kindly aided us in our meetings, have so far enabled us to meet these increasing claims. Extended resources would enable us to spread our operations to other populous and most destitute districts of the vast city.

"A large calico sign over each shop invites the workmen to enter. We also distribute small bills of invitation in each district, telling the people that 'English friends wish to speak to them of the love of Jesus Christ.' Some young Englishmen, Swedes, and Frenchmen have greatly helped us at the doors by encouraging suitable persons to come in. Warm appreciation of the kindness of these helpers is often evidenced. Recently an old man at Montmartre said, on leaving, 'I came in here the first time because, from outside, I saw a young lady offer a hymn-book to an *ouvrier* with a smile.' In each room we have an harmonium. Most of our hymns we have ourselves imitated from the English. They are generously printed for our use by a friend at Sunderland. The cheerful tunes evidently delight the people. They make great efforts to sing. Often it is touching to hear their voices in such stanzas as—

'Vive le nom de Jésus-Christ,'
'Des pays froids et déserts,' &c.

We rejoice to reflect that unconsciously they learn the words, and so come to have at least some outlines of the Gospel impressed on the memory."

How to conduct such meetings must have been at first an anxious thought to their originators. Much depended on this. They must be attractive

and interesting as well as instructive. They must not be controversial, and yet they must be evangelical. Mr. M'All has not told us the process by which he arrived at his permanent order and arrangement; nor how he was led to adopt some of the peculiarities which distinguish his meetings from others. What he tells us is as follows:—

"The meetings are very simply conducted. On entering, a magazine, a Bible, or other book is lent to each attendant. The French counterpart of the 'British Workman' is a great favourite. Also 'L'Ami de la Jeunesse.' I wish extremely that we had publications in French fully corresponding with the *Leisure Hour* and *Sunday at Home*. The Bible and Tract Societies, and the other agencies for Scripture portions and suitable books, have generously aided us by free grants. We have also a small free lending library at each station.

"Most striking evidences of the lamentable ignorance of the Word of God prevalent in these districts meet us from time to time. For example, more than once, after borrowing from us successively the New Testament and the Bible, an *ouvrier* has requested the loan of 'another volume of the same work.' An old lady, after receiving copies of several of the Gospels at our room, was anxious for 'the Gospel of St. Paul' to complete the set. We often feel much on seeing a man take away on loan, with evident delight, a Bible 'for his children to read,' the first Bible ever seen in his house!

"In the meetings we have hymns alternately with short addresses or readings. Variety and brevity are aimed at. On Sundays something more of the usual form of a religious service is adopted. We give a short sermon, and the feature of prayer is added. The reading of the Bible is listened to on all occasions with marked interest. Political allusions and religious controversies are wholly shunned. We wish it to be under-

stood that we attack no Church or system, that our sole aim is to direct our hearers to Christ. Many French *pasteurs* and Christians, besides those mentioned, help us from time to time (M. Robin, of Belleville, M. Armand Delille, M. Gaubert, with evangelists, &c.) Our friend and brother, the Rev. T. B. Hart, is always ready with his kind aid.

"When English or American friends visit us, if they prefer to speak in English, the people listen with eagerness while each sentence is translated into French. These visits are quite a kindness and a real source of strength to us. The sympathy so manifested tends to awaken the people to our earnest purpose. During the summer this has formed a very pleasing feature.

"We feared at the outset that when the charm of novelty should fail, our audiences might melt away. Thus far we have, on the contrary, witnessed a steady increase. The attendances were maintained throughout the sultry summer.

"The statistics (corrected to November 25th) are as follows:—

No. of sittings (chairs) in the 4 rooms	500
French meetings held	382
Of which for children	76
Aggregate attendance	30,520
Average for each meeting throughout	85
Average attendance per week, for some time	900

(The majority of attendants are men at the adult meetings, boys at the children's meetings.)

Books issued from lending libraries	524
Tracts and Scripture portions distributed	48,000

(Exclusive of 2779 given during short summer journeys in Normandy and in the Vosges, and in ten French meetings held with the people there.)

"In addition, 22 English services have been held, and 130 books issued from our little English library."

The following is a page of fragments well worth the reading, as affording us some glimpses of the people's feelings as they went and came; giving out to one another, or to the workers, their casual remarks on this strange novelty that had arisen among them, and which without difficulty, and almost without opposition, had found a place in a district the unlikeliest to have welcomed such messengers, and such a message :—

"A few candidly spoken words may reveal much respecting the *contrasted attitudes* of different sections of the populace towards religion. One rugged son of toil, in answer to our question—'Do you not want a true Friend?'—replied, 'Non; je n'ai besoin de rien. Pour moi, j'adore le soleil. Ma religion n'est que la religion du travail.'

"Again, a man, evidently full of himself, said, at the door, 'Religion is a good thing for the young and for old people; but as for me, who am in full life, I have no need of anything of the kind.' A profound philosopher, truly!

"A kind-hearted Roman Catholic lady, a frequent attendant, had asked us to her house. Her husband, a man of wealth, received us very kindly, and spoke freely. He said, 'No man cares to be religious here. The priests have made the way to heaven so very difficult that no one cares to go.' He added, 'Only the women go to church. It would be reckoned a disgrace to one of us if we should enter such a place.'

"Turn to the opposite side. A hard-worked *ouvrier* came eagerly to us, saying, 'I want to be taught religion. I do not understand it. I want to learn what it is.' Another man, addressing a hesitant group of his neighbours at one of our doors, said, 'I am a Catholic; but go you in. You will hear only the Gospel there; and there is nothing to pay.'

"People are constantly telling us that they wish to 'change their religion.' Parents, especially, desire that their children should be 'trained as Protestants.' A few days ago a *sergent-de-ville* requested me to come to his house and explain to him how he and all his family might learn our 'religion'—meaning the Gospel in its simplicity.

"Another very pleasing feature is to find workmen inducing their fellow-workmen to attend, and bringing them to us to borrow Bibles, &c.

"Various incidents seem to show that our simple mode of conducting the meetings is not unsuccessful. An intelligent man said to me, 'I like your réunions, because there is no mixing of politics with religion. I do not say this to flatter; I sincerely feel it.' The utmost care is needed in avoiding political allusions. A well-to-do tradesman said to me, after a meeting, amidst a group in the doorway, evidently to test me:—'Votre réunion est jolie; mais moi, je dis surtout, vive la république!' I replied, 'Vive la liberté!' and every one seemed to be satisfied.

"The people are often, at first much puzzled to understand who and what we are. They have been heard whispering to each other outside, 'C'est la Jésuites! C'est un prêtre, n'est ce pas?' The pretty Scripture prints ornamenting our rooms, supplied by the Sunday School Union and by friends, are useful in this respect. They form a quiet expression of our true position, being so markedly unlike the Roman Catholic pictures.

"One evening when the congregation was dispersing, a bourgeois came up, full of self-assertion. After questioning our young English friend at the door, he said, 'Ah, this is all very well for the *ouvriers;* it is not the thing for me.' A *sergent-de-ville* on his beat, hearing this, addressed the bourgeois:—'Sir, it is a very good thing for everybody; it is a very good thing for Belleville.' The policemen have been repeatedly heard recommending the bystanders to go in, assuring them that

they would hear only what is for their good. Many times we are cheered by the warm pressure of our hand on leaving, and the words, 'Je vous remercie infiniment; je reviendrai.' And they do return. Nor is it unusual to hear during the meeting, after some home truth has been spoken, such expressions as, 'C'est bon,' 'C'est vrai.'

"The Sunday before our leaving, a French friend who helps at our doors mentioned that the same afternoon two or three young men, who, on entering, evidently intended to make sport, had remained as attentive listeners, and that he had recently observed the same thing more than once at Montmartre.

"It is amusing to observe the surprise of the people when assured that everything is gratuitous. 'Do you give all this for nothing!' they ask. Some seem almost offended when we decline to take their money. The other day, during a discussion outside, after the meeting, whether we were Catholics or Protestants, several were heard to say, 'Never mind which they are; we will come again, for here all are treated alike; everything is free, and every one is made welcome.' It is something to disarm prejudice and elicit kindly feeling. We therefore hail every such token, as giving hope of some higher result afterwards.

"We are not left wholly without indications of that higher result. A widow and her daughter had formed the dark and terrible impression that there was no God, because, they reasoned, if He had existed, He could not have allowed them to be so heavily afflicted. The husband had perished in the Commune, and nearly all the children had died in rapid succession. They refused to enter any place of worship. Led, somehow, to one of our rooms, they there learned to see a Father's correcting love, where, before, only cruelty and vengeance had appeared; and, we trust, have been brought to a heartfelt reception of the Saviour."

The last extract which we give from this interest-

ing address contains the writer's impressions, on a review of the first year of labour :—

"After a year of close observation, our first impression respecting the attitude of this vast populace towards religion is confirmed. In this view, three groups may be distinguished. The first consists of men so steeped in atheism and self-indulgence that they seem well-nigh impervious to all ameliorating influences. The second is composed of those who have no idea of religion, save under the distorted shape of a system which they have utterly rejected. In meeting *them*, the first and difficult task is to awaken them to the existence of life, freedom, love, where they had supposed only exaction, artifice, imposition to have place. The third group is that of those who are *already convinced* that there is a reality in religion, and are in *waiting posture*, ready to welcome the life-giving message.

"In view of the disposition to hear, evidenced at our four unobtrusive stations, we cannot doubt that, were similar arrangements extended to every district in Paris, attentive listeners would be multiplied. My excellent neighbour, Monsieur Robin, Protestant pastor of Belleville, says that there is room in Paris for *fifty* such places, and for fifty missionary ministers. Very recently, an intelligent workman, one of our constant attendants, came to me, after a meeting at Ménilmontant, to express his firm conviction that if a building *ten times the size* were thrown open for Christian preaching on that spot, it would be crowded with willing listeners.

"With what *pain* do we feel our inability to occupy more than a corner of the vast field ! A generous-hearted Liverpool merchant, himself a descendant of the Huguenots, said to me after our meeting at Montmartre, a few days ago—'Every quarter throughout Paris ought to have a religious meeting-place for the workmen.' Alive to the impossibility of our meeting the vast exigency alone, he suggested that resources

and additional labourers might be found in England, so as to secure '*a girdle of mission-stations round the whole city.*' Could this be effected, the warm co-operation of French pastors and Christian workers might be relied on.

"It is our fond hope that, on the basis of our stations, *permanent Christian institutions* may eventually arise. If, in each quarter, a plain but spacious building could be secured, comprising a large room for meeting and services, a reading-room, and a small lending library, who can doubt that great blessings would flow from it throughout its neighbourhood?

"In these arrangements *the children* ought not to be lost sight of. Every observer of the religious needs of Paris and of France must receive a profound impression with reference to its rising race. Our weekly juvenile meetings, on the holiday afternoon, enabled us to reach, more or less, about 300. In these children, most of them grievously destitute of moral home training, we see that which convinces us, that could wholesome teaching be spread everywhere among the French children of this generation, the nation would, under God's blessing, *rise up morally renovated* in the next. In spite of the efforts of the dominant Church to monopolise education, there can be no doubt that a multitude of parents would thankfully place their families under such teaching. Often, as I remarked, they come to us expressing the wish that their children should be trained as Protestants. Their meaning is not that they desire a sectarian education, but that they wish their children to imbibe principles of Christian morality.

"It is touching to hear these young voices in the hymns we teach them, the only words of the kind some of them are ever taught! Parents (fathers as well as mothers) often come in, pleased to listen while their children sing, and answer Scripture questions.

"But the thought of the tens of thousands of the young in Paris not brought under even this modicum of influence is overwhelming! The Protestant schools, though worked with

intelligent devotedness, are but thinly scattered, and leave many populous quarters untouched by such agencies.

"Such, brethren, is our essay, to which, after two or three days, we hope to return, and enter on the long winter campaign. Will you not attend us, throughout it, with your prayerful sympathy? The assurance that we are thus remembered in our own land is unspeakably helpful.

"If we may be blessed in conveying to even a few of those who were 'sitting in the shadow of death' the light and love which shall render them as leaven to the mass around, what is any small personal sacrifice or hardship, in the balance! To be permitted even to *make the attempt* in our Lord's name is a sacred privilege. Ask, then, for us, that we may, during the winter, not only see interested listeners around us, but hear from many the inquiry after eternal life. Ask, too, that other hearts may be stirred, and the way of other labourers made plain, who shall come over and strengthen our hands. Ask, for us, wisdom, patience, courage, strength of every kind, that we may use our privilege rightly, to the glory of Him in whose name we go forth!"

We have given, piece by piece, the whole of this statement, not only because of its great importance, as the first intimation to the public of what was going on, but because in a work like this, it is both interesting and satisfactory to discover the beginnings, however small, and to watch the gradual, or rather the rapid rise, of this mighty enterprise, which the Churches of Great Britain are only beginning to appreciate.

The report announces the opening of the Belleville station in January, 1872; of the Ménil-

montant station in the following February; and of two others, Montmartre and Faubourg St. Antoine, in the April of the same year. "In our four rooms," it says, "we have 515 sittings." The last report (1878) gives 5192 sittings! The first report gives the aggregate attendance for the year at 37,957, the last at 421,370. The first gives the number of French meetings during the year at 456, the last at 2788.

It is interesting thus to compare the first year with the last; to mark the rapid growth of the work and the enlarging of the circle; and to trace back to the Belleville station, in the Rue Julien Lacroix, with its 108 sittings, the small fountain-head of this great Mission.*

The French pastors early united with Mr. M'All, and threw themselves into the work. Dr. Fisch, M. Theodore Monod, M. Robin, and others, gave important help. Several laymen did the same. And it is evident that the ultimate success of the Mission will depend greatly on the native workers, whether pastors or laymen. A native agency is

* At Montmartre and Belleville a new expedient was attempted. Two tea-meetings were held; the first for English friends, the second for the French people at Belleville, on the anniversary of the opening of the station there. The *innovation* on French customs was most successful and pleasant. At the English gathering three or four intelligent men got up to thank Mr. M'All for having come to them.

specially to be desired and aimed at. Foreigners may do something; but ultimately the French Christians must take up the work, if it is to be permanent and aggressive; if it is to permeate, not only Paris, but the cities and villages of France. *French liberality* must also be stimulated. The *pecuniary* burden must devolve on French shoulders. Not that we grudge English gold. It is a noble position for a nation to occupy,—to stretch out a helping hand to all nations of the earth; which Great Britain, in the midst of all her sin and selfishness, at this day is doing. It is no common honour that God has put upon us to make England the religious metropolis of the world, so that from us go forth not only tracts and books and Bibles in all languages, but missionaries of the cross to every nation. In the Continental wars of the earlier part of this century, England was described as

> ". . . The fond ally,
> That fights for all . . . ."

And, perhaps, when it was added—

> " But ever fights in vain,"

there was truth in the sarcasm. In England's better warfare of the last fifty years, there has been a truer and a holier " fighting for all," the issues of which have been life and not death;—victories over

all the earth, which the world neither applauds nor chronicles, but which are not the less on that account blessed and glorious. In these battles she does not "fight in vain." In the former warfare she lavished millions without grudging, and shed blood without scruple, in behalf of one and another and another kingdom. And, doubtless, she achieved something for earthly liberty and order. But the cost was great. In the latter warfare, against darkness and sin, with no carnal weapons, but seeking only to bring the prisoners out of their prison-house, and to give light to them that sit in darkness, she need not grudge her gold; she need not shrink from bloodless triumphs, the triumphs of peace and holiness. Let all the world know that there is a nation whom God delights to honour; and whom He honours by making use of her gold and her power, to transmit His Book, and the Gospel which that Book contains, to all kindreds of the earth.

But there is a limit to this. This small island, with its thousand responsibilities and burdens, cannot draw illimitably upon its resources. The nations whom she helps must help themselves. We cannot continue subsidising the whole world; not because we grudge it, but because there are limits to our exchequer, and our own people have claims upon us, even superior to the whole Continent together.

France especially is now a prosperous nation. The hoarded gains of her population in all her towns and villages, which were lying useless, perhaps in chest or cupboard, were drawn out by the Prussian demand for the late war-indemnity, and are now bearing interest of five per cent. or more, to their owners; so that her citizens, and, not least, her peasantry, have become much richer than before; their incomes increased and made permanent and unfluctuating. As a prosperous community, we may now appeal to her to help herself. We cannot do everything for her. She must step forward herself both with the money and the men.

If the breath of a new life has gone over France this will not be long of being done.* The same

* "France, beyond all doubt, is labouring to detach herself from Roman Catholicism, whether this is to be done gradually or at once. The last elections turned out against clericalism, and as Roman Catholicism among us will not separate her cause from that of Ultramontanism, one may say that the elections struck a blow at Roman Catholicism. It is enough to listen to the lamentations of the clerical papers, to the complaints of the Abbé Bougaud, Vicar-General of Orleans, about the daily increasing difficulty of recruiting the priestly ranks, to the despairing appeals for Peter's pence, and for the furtherance of other Catholic contrivances; it is enough, on the other hand, to see the churches deserted in three quarters of the provinces, and the increasing number of civil interments—to understand the reality of the rupture, daily widening into a divorce, that has taken place between the Romish Church and the populations of France. Is it hard to explain this rupture—this divorce? We do not need to speak of the new dogmas of her own invention that Romanism has thought proper to proclaim, as if to do her utmost to deepen the

mighty spirit, that has been quickening the dead, can raise up an apostolic ministry. The Bartholomew massacre slew 100,000 of her best and noblest; but now out of their ashes is arising another host to do the work which they expected to do. If the land of Coligny is true to herself she will rise to the responsibility of the crisis. Native evangelists and pastors will be sent forth to carry out a mission for *the whole of France*, which no foreigner can undertake. The present work has been begun by the English stranger; but unless the stimulus which it is giving to the Protestants of the land issue in some large, noble,—shall I say, *daring*,—enterprise, for the evangelisation of their fellow-countrymen, the M'All Mission will not have fully served its end, nor accomplished the aspirations of its founder.

It may be true that the present rulers of France are of foreign origin, and that the French do not

gulf between the blind faith that she requires from her followers and the scepticism of the century. We do not need to speak of the new and unusual phase of pilgrimages, or of Catholic Clubs, or of the materialistic and pagan devotions to the Sacré-Cœur, to our Lady of Lourdes or of La Salette. Nor need we refer to the contrast, always offensive, between the doctrines of Christ and the practices of Popery—between the simplicity and humility which the Gospel teaches and the pomp and parade of our prelates, some of whom will only enter their episcopal cities when announced by the noise of cannon, and preceded by a military *cortège;* unlike the Son of David, who entered Jerusalem riding on an ass."—M. RÉVEILLAUD.

object to foreign help. The Prime Minister is English, the President of the Chambers Italian, several of the Government officials are, by descent at least, foreigners, so that France is governed by "exotic Frenchmen," or rather, by nationalised foreigners. To this the nation assents. But, then, all these have been fused by education and long residence into French ways and sympathies. No difference comes to the surface. But it will take years before the like fusion or naturalisation can take place in the present mission, and the ungospelised millions of the land cannot afford to wait. The white fields demand immediate reaping; and the present labourers are quite inadequate to the task, both in numbers and in fitness: and He who has so unexpectedly ripened the harvest can alone provide the reapers. As in the first century the fields of Europe and Asia ripened, and the Lord of the harvest sent forth His apostolic band of labourers into Greece and Italy to cut down the corn-fields of Corinth, and Thessalonica, and Galatia, and Rome,—of Antioch, and Ephesus, and Colosse; so may we expect that experienced sickles are now preparing for the fields of France. Only this singular honour has been conferred on England, to lead the way, and by her self-denying zeal to stimulate the energies of the Christians of the French fatherland. Instead of

the imperfect sickles wielded by foreign hands, He will provide implements more efficacious and more successful.*

There are wealthy Protestants in France; let them consecrate their abundance to God, and not waste it on themselves.

Meanwhile it is no common privilege thus to help a neighbour, and to communicate of our plenty to a people to whom we have so many ties of interest and sympathy; yet with whom we have been so often at war.

* Yet let us not forget the following striking incident and testimony:—

"During the period of the meetings of the Evangelical Alliance in London, in 1851, one speaker was recommending the Foreign Aid Society, on the ground that it only employed French and Swiss preachers, and did not send out Englishmen, when Dr. Merle d'Aubigné rose and said, that he for one could not accept this as a recommendation; for if it had not been for the grace of God in ordering the mission of the venerable Robert Haldane from Scotland, I myself, so far as man can see, would not have been here to-day."—"Lives of the Haldanes," p. 471.

CHAPTER III.

PROGRESS AND EXPANSION.

WE come now to the first regular report issued by Mr. M'All, from which we mean largely to borrow, for the same reasons for which we drew so unsparingly on his Congregational address.

It is headed, "Mission to the Working Men of Paris; Report for fourteen months, November, 1871, to January, 1873." We confess to the great interest we ourselves have felt in perusing this report. Subsequent reports contain, of course, more information, and deal more in incident and detail; but this, as the authentic and official narrative of the origin and development of the work, has special interest for all who love to trace a great and successful undertaking to its first beginnings. One likes, not merely in the spirit of poetry or sentiment, but as an interesting piece of geography, to go back along a river's banks, and to stand in the quiet upland glen where it first arose.

To this report the late Dr. Binney, of London, wrote an introductory note, giving his own impressions, which are worth preserving:—"I can hardly say that I was requested to write these few lines; the more correct statement, perhaps, would be that I offered to write them, for such is my appreciation of the disinterested zeal and laborious self-denial of my dear friends, Mr. and Mrs. M'All, and such my interest in their work, that I felt moved to help, in any way in my power, what they had undertaken. It is no doubt a somewhat singular form of benevolent agency,—this sitting down of two English people in one of the less attractive districts of Paris, in order to labour gratuitously for the religious benefit of the working class. The very idea of the thing will to some seem strange and Quixotic, and may be regarded as something which will turn out to be wanting in depth and permanence."

This is just the very thought that must have occurred to many at the time, perhaps even to the originators themselves, trying their faith, and it may be burdening their spirits. Alone in a land of strangers, face to face with the great Parisian mass of human wickedness, with no organisation to assist, and no society to fall back upon, they could not but sometimes ask themselves why they had ventured on such an enterprise, and whether a work begun

with such very slender appliances was likely to last, or to make any permanent impression on that city of atheism and Popery and pleasure.

"However this may be," Dr. Binney adds, "in respect to the scheme itself, it is not to be doubted that, in individual minds, *impressions will be made which, though the machinery were to vanish to-morrow, will be lasting as eternity*, and have inestimable results, immediate and remote, in time."

We have italicised a few words in the above sentence, which seem specially worthy of attention. Were nothing more to come out of this work than what this first report records, and had it ceased after only a year's existence, it would not have been in vain for Paris and for France.

When we remember that the following sentence was written within little more than a year after the mission had been set on foot, and before it had reached anything like the dimensions to which it has now come, we shall be inclined to ask, if Dr. Binney spoke thus at a time when there were but few stations, what would he have written had he lived to see the twenty-three?

"It is wonderful," he writes, "to us how much our friends have done, in the number of stations established and services sustained; it is obvious that the work must demand much thought and incessant

labour; and it is reasonable to expect that what was begun in faith, and is carried on with prayer and painstaking, will, through the Divine blessing, be followed by some encouraging measure of success."

His concluding sentence deserves special notice. It speaks to the Churches of Great Britain. It is a call for workers; a summons to Christian men and women. It has been in some measure responded to, but the increasing necessities of the case, and the widening of the field, demand a much larger response. He asks for labourers,—the right men and the right women to do the work of God in Paris. "Who will go for us?" is his question. He did not live to see the largeness of the answer given. We see it to-day. Yet we still call for more. The 100,000 of Belleville alone would require at least fifty labourers; how many shall we ask for the 2,000,000 of the whole city?

"If another English couple, like-minded with our friends, and able to devote themselves to such a work, were to become colleagues and coadjutors in the Mission, it would both lighten labour and increase it, by cheering our friends, sharing their toil, and giving vigour and variety to existing or projecting forms of service. In the meantime, that this singularly interesting work of Mr. and Mrs. M'All may

be strengthened and sustained, it is hereby heartily commended to the loving prayers and liberal contributions of the English friends into whose hands these words may come."

We think it important to preserve such an early testimony as this to the excellency of the work, both because it is interesting in itself, and because our narrative will show, as it proceeds, how fully the opinion of the writer has been justified and borne out by the subsequent history of the Mission.

We come now to the report itself, which, exclusive of accounts and subscription lists, consists of only seven pages. Yet upon these seven pages we dwell with even greater interest than upon the more extended reports of subsequent years. This *first* report (1872), with its seven pages, chronicles four stations, with the prospect of a fifth; the *second* (1873), consisting of ten pages, sets down eight stations; the *third* (1874), with its fifteen pages, registers eleven stations; the *fourth* (1875), with its seventeen pages, gives us a list of seventeen stations; the *fifth* (1876), with its twenty-three pages, records nineteen stations; the *sixth* (1877), with its thirty-eight pages, tells us of twenty-two stations; the *seventh* (1878) and last, with its thirty-six pages, numbers twenty-two stations, though more properly they are twenty-three.

In some of the quotations* which follow the reader may notice a slight repetition of some of the early facts, which he will easily know how to excuse. This could hardly be avoided without mutilating the extracts, which we are unwilling to do :—

"Two months after our arrival in Paris were spent in anxious and laborious preparation for our work. Localities had to be sought out, the sanction of the municipal authorities obtained, and the meeting-rooms furnished and made ready. Our first meeting was held in our Belleville room on Wednesday even-

* We give, in a note, the following statement as to a peculiar feature of the work :—"The development of the work has called for several new features. At three stations we have recently formed classes for teaching English to the workmen—a method which appears to promise well for securing their confidence in our friendship. At two stations we have just organised French Sunday schools. Could we obtain additional helpers, we should rejoice to extend these arrangements to all the districts. As we come to know the people more, the requirements in visitation, &c., constantly increase. We are seeking to engage part of the time of an excellent Christian friend, a man of experience, to aid us especially in this department. In addition, would that some brother in the ministry, with his wife, could come out and join us.

"On opening our Montmartre station, we found ourselves amidst a little colony of intelligent English workmen, who requested that a meeting should also be held for them. With this desire we gladly complied, and have, since April last, conducted a Sunday afternoon English service there, together with an English Lending Library. The pressure of French work now leads us thankfully to confide the chief charge of this section to our friend and brother, the Rev. T. Baron Hart. Having had to relinquish two out-stations at the time of the siege, he is able to undertake two meetings weekly, and has also just now succeeded in forming a small English Sunday school. The work will, however, still depend upon our Mission Fund for its support as before."

ing, 17th January, 1872. Twelve months of unbroken effort being completed, we wish to lay before the numerous friends who have spontaneously enabled us to meet the necessary outlay a statement of the mode in which their contributions have been employed.

"Before entering on financial details, a few words may be offered on the effort in itself. The general features of its origin and history are contained in a paper read before the Congregational Union of England and Wales at Nottingham, in October last, kindly inserted by our esteemed friend, the Rev. R. Ashton, in the Congregational Year-Book for 1873. Notwithstanding the entirely unsectarian character of our undertaking, we gladly made that statement, in response to the invitation of the Committee of the Union, conveyed by the Rev. A. Hannay, desiring to elicit the prayerful sympathy of our brethren.

"For the information of those friends into whose hands the Year-Book may not fall, it may be well to present a sketch of the enterprise from its commencement.

"During a brief summer holiday in 1871, Mrs. M. and I made a first visit to Paris. No thought was more remote than that of quitting friends and country in order to become workers in France. Such, however, was the impression produced on our mind by the eagerness with which the tracts we offered were received, and by the earnest words of an intelligent workman, who, standing amidst a large group of his comrades in the heart of Belleville, assured us that many of them were ready for the teachings of a free and pure religion, that we were led to most anxious thought on the possibility of a Christian enterprise in those neglected districts, so recently the scene of dire calamities.

"After consultation with experienced Christian labourers in Paris, especially with Dr. Fisch, we deemed it our duty to leave our kind friends at Hadleigh, and, girding on the missionary harness, to fix our residence in Belleville, among the workmen.

We resolved to endeavour to open mission-rooms, and to invite to them the workmen and their families. The fact that those we specially desired to influence were wholly unused to attendance on religious services, suggested the idea of meetings in which there should be no lengthened speaking, but a number of short, pointed readings or addresses, varied by the singing of hymns, and, as soon as the people might seem prepared for it, the offering of prayer. The reading of the Bible would, we felt, form an interesting feature ; that book having, sad to say, for multitudes here the charm of absolute novelty ! To those arrangements we proposed to add the provision of illustrated magazines, such as 'L'Ouvrier Français,' and of other periodicals, so that all entering our rooms might be invited to read until the meeting should commence. We also proposed to open a Lending Library, for the issue of Bibles and New Testaments, and other good books, at each station. The excellent society at Toulouse enabled us to form these libraries. These, with the distribution of tracts and of Scripture portions at the doors of our rooms, formed the chief features of our plan.

"We are thankful to state that, in carrying it into effect, we have been greatly encouraged. Such an attempt, put forth in such districts, could not fail to involve many difficulties and trials. At Montmartre, the opening of our room in April last was the signal for determined and bitter opposition on the part of the atheists of the district. Each Monday evening representatives of that party attending for the purpose of disputing all our statements. The newspaper press was also brought into requisition to 'write us down.' We deemed it best to allow questions, and these, with the aid of Messrs. Théodore Monod, Leuzinger, and others, were answered. After the last of these bitter cavils had been met, it was delightful to hear the favourite French hymn, sung with voice and heart in the crowded room, Qu'ils sont beaux sur les montagnes, 'How beautiful upon the mountains,' &c. Ever since, the full attendance and marked attention on these Monday evenings have been most cheering.

So far as we can ascertain, since the formation of the fine new Boulevard Ornano, no religious meeting of any description had been attempted within its precincts until the opening of our room. We account it an unspeakable honour to have been the first to endeavour to plant there the standard of Divine truth and love.

"The marked fondness of the people (the men especially) for the hymns we have imitated for them from the English is worthy of mention. They evidently take great pleasure in learning to sing them with us to the cheerful tunes familiar in England, but entirely new to them. To a valued friend at Sunderland we are deeply indebted for gratuitously printing 1000 copies of more than forty of these hymns. The words becoming imprinted on the memory, it is not too much to hope that these germs of heavenly truth may spring into life even after many years.

"When we were about to open our earliest stations, it was even the opinion of the municipal authorities in several of the quarters that, in consequence of the prevailing disposition to mock at religion, we should be unable to proceed. Those who entertained these fears have since congratulated us on the moralising tendency of the meetings. Members of the police force, especially, have repeatedly borne this testimony. They have everywhere shown themselves friendly to our object. We had the pleasure of presenting the 'Almanach des Publications Populaires' to each man in the Belleville force, eighty-one in number, as a small New-Year's recognition of their civility in preserving us from interruption throughout the year. They decline to receive money, but are delighted with our books and pictures. Great politeness has been observed towards us by the civic authorities; but the utmost care is required to avoid every political allusion and all religious controversy in our meetings, the terms of our authorisation expressly forbidding both.

"Many who have visited us have been surprised on witness-

ing the respectful attention of those whom they had supposed to be inaccessible to any such influence. It is a pleasing sight to look round on the group, often densely packed, of ouvriers in their blouses, with their wives and children; to observe their eager listening to some incident or illustration pointing to the vital truth and the almighty Saviour. Still more, their cordial shake of the hand, and kind expressions of thanks, at the close of the meetings, often revive our hearts and lighten our toil. Would that we could rejoice over many as fully devoted to Jesus! There are a few respecting whom this joy is allowed us. Many others, at each of the stations, have become constant attendants. We ask the fervent prayer of Christians at home that many may indeed be 'brought out of darkness into marvellous light.' Meanwhile, we feel that even to gain the ear of numbers for the Gospel is a result over which we have reason to rejoice.

"Our mission rooms are all *shops*, which we have to rent wholly for the purpose. These, being situated on public thoroughfares, attract the notice of passers-by. Some of our kind helpers always stand at the doors, inviting the people to come in. At each station, from its opening, we have held, with unbroken regularity, two meetings weekly, one on the Sunday, one on a week-night, besides two weekly meetings for children, on their holiday afternoon, which are also largely attended. We have been enabled to carry out the whole of our arrangements amidst wintry cold and summer heat; and it is a gratifying fact that not on a single occasion have we been without an audience."

But the most important part of the report remains to be cited. We have seen something of the Mission in its external appliances; let us learn something of its workings and results. Mr. M'All thus writes:—

"We frequently hear expressions which evidence that the view of religion as an affair of the heart and life is *absolutely new* to the thought of many around us. A remarkably intelligent young man, now a constant attendant, said, only a few days ago, 'I have been reading carefully the little *Evangiles* (Scripture portions) you have given me, and I find in them a religion, not of buying and selling, not of forms and absolutions, but "*la vraie morale*," something which goes to our heart and life; and I approve it.' The men are especially interested in the recital of examples of moral courage, self-denial, patience, &c. An English workman, who attends many of our French meetings, tells us that he often hears them say at the close, referring to such recitals, 'Ah! c'est gentil ça. Ils sont bons, ces anglais: C'est la liberté, l'égalité, la fraternité.' These favourite words are used by them with reference to our receiving no payment, and to the fact that all who come are treated alike.

"Again and again they will say to us, 'Vous vous donnez beaucoup de peine pour nous: nous en devons être bien reconnaissants.' A few evenings ago, after we had taught an English class of sixty persons or more at our new station Faubourg St. Antoine, a most respectable *ouvrier*, a constant attendant, stood forward amidst them all, and said to me, 'I wish to thank you and *madame* very much for all the pains you take on our behalf here; and we hope that great good will be the result.' Bright looks and a hearty shake of the hand all round seemed to assure us that this *ouvrier* spoke the general sentiment.

"We are tempted to record the heart-cheering words with which an intelligent medical man, a Swedenborgian, who has himself laboured much to lead the *ouvriers* towards religion by the aid of scientific inquiries, received us to his house—'Je désire vous faire un bon accueil dans ma maison si humble; vous qui êtes les anges gardiens de nos pauvres ouvriers français.'

"A few weeks ago the first of our regular attendants who,

to our knowledge, has been called into eternity, died very suddenly of paralysis. He was an old man, respectable but poor. We had often exchanged a few words with him respecting the sorrows of the present and the glorious hope beyond. His sister, a confirmed invalid, said, in speaking of his death, 'Well, he is happy, doubtless. He was a good man. He loved Jesus.' On another occasion, a gentleman who had never, I believe, attended any but Roman Catholic services before, said to a friend, 'I feel, after all, that I want something more than I have yet found.' A kind invitation brought him to one of our meetings while we were in England. A French *pasteur* conducted the service in our stead. The gentleman listened with interest to his words, and on leaving said, 'I shall come again when Mr. M'All returns.' On the day in which he had planned to be with us he was laid in the grave.

"It was only on the evening of writing this that a French gentleman said to us, 'Je vous félicite de votre bonne œuvre pour notre classe ouvrière.' He went on to express his belief that, could similar efforts be multiplied, an important influence would be exercised for the amelioration of morals and the elevation of the people. He said earnestly that the classe ouvrière had been long and disastrously *neglected;* but he was of opinion that even yet they could be made alive to the realities of morals and religion. As a Roman Catholic, he added, he admired the unsectarianism of our procedure.

"Such spontaneous testimonies (and we are cheered by them frequently) encourage the belief that the mode we have adopted commends itself to the judgment of those who know the French populace well.

"We are thankful to add that expressions, both oral and written, could be recorded, leading us to believe that the good seed has already yielded its fruit of spiritual life in some hearts. Some of these have filled us with inexpressible gratitude and joy.

"Reviewing the year's history, we are encouraged to go for-

ward, relying on Divine help. The impression of the urgent need for such an enterprise which led us to break the ties of pastorate and home, has been deepened day by day. Yet it is but little that so few labourers can hope to accomplish towards the reclaim of so vast a spiritual desert. Would that the hearts of others might be moved, and their way made plain, to come over and strengthen our hands, and thus render possible the planting in each dark and desolate quarter of this vast city, of a little centre whence heavenly light and love may radiate!

"Amidst many toils and not a few hardships, pressed by a profound sense of responsibility, in need of wisdom to direct, and, above all, of the influence of the Divine Spirit to render our humble endeavours effectual, we crave to be had in ceaseless remembrance before our Father's throne!"

We close this chapter, then, with the above conclusion of the first report, dated thus—"R. W. M'All, 28 Rue Clavel, Belleville, Paris, January 16th, 1873." It is a valuable document, and, because of its value, we have made large use of it. Its simplicity and modesty commend it to every reader. The writer does not obtrude himself, nor magnify his own efforts, nor dilate upon his hardships and sacrifices, nor mar the noble narrative by calling attention to the agents. He writes quietly, barely,—too barely, perhaps; without ornament. He has made sacrifices; but he does not speak of them. He has had days and nights of toil and weariness and anxiety; but he passes over these. Only those who have been upon the spot, and have seen the interior of the work, can have any idea of what these have been.

Perhaps with more self-assertion he might have borne down some of his difficulties. But, refusing, like his Master, to "strive," he has doubtless chosen the better and, ultimately, the more successful part. Yet, knowing how to yield, he knows also how to stand; knowing how to conciliate, he does not know how to compromise. Compromise in a position such as his would be fatal.

First from Rue Clavel, Belleville, latterly from Rue Fessart, Belleville, he has gone forth to do his daily work for nearly eight years; known in Belleville as the friend of the people; appreciated and honoured as if he were both pastor and priest of that vast parish.

The personal influence he has acquired is undoubtedly great, and mighty results have often been accomplished by "personal influence." The affection with which he is regarded is no less remarkable, so that if he were injured, or assailed, all Belleville would turn out in his defence. As (in a sense) the *resident minister*, he has won a position which he could not have had if he had taken up his dwelling in some other part of the city. He has cast in his lot with the people for whom he came to spend and to be spent.*

* Since this was written he has been led by circumstances to leave Belleville, and to take up his residence in 147 Boulevard Malesherbes.

It has been said that religious influence descends, but does not ascend; that the lower ranks are influenced by the higher, not the higher by the lower; that therefore efforts for the regeneration of such a city as Paris will be failures unless we get hold of the upper classes first; and that it is a mistake to begin at the lowest faubourg. We question the theory of ascent and descent, for history has often recorded the reverse. But even though it had been true, "the thing was of God" in the present case, and Mr. M'All had no choice but to follow where he was led. He did not choose Belleville; God chose it for him, and set him there, to do a work which was to spread itself wide and far. The theory of ascent and descent does not trouble a true evangelist. He does not calculate nor choose. He enters in at the door which a Divine hand has opened, and works according to the strength given, leaving it to the great Master to determine what the fruit is to be. In the present case, there are signs not doubtful, that the upper Parisians are not uninterested in what is so profoundly moving the lower; that the boulevards are asking what is this that is tranquillising the faubourgs, and making them so easy to be governed. Once they might have said, Can any good thing come out of Belleville? But now, when they see that some good thing has come out

of it, that its atmosphere has been purified, and that the whole tone of the masses has been bettered by the change, they are not disinclined to listen to a Gospel that has wrought such a transformation, which has not only smoothed over a political crisis, but warded off social shipwreck, absorbing those unruly elements among the "fierce democracy," which, if again let loose, would not have been satisfied with levelling the Vendôme Column, or setting fire to the Tuileries, but of which the unsparing watch-word would have been, Down with the rich! and death to the priests!

The Gospel has come in between Paris and revolution. It has conserved, and not destroyed. "Peace, be still!" has been its political message to the *ouvriers* of the French capital. By proclaiming the true "equality" of men in Christ Jesus, it has prevented the proclamation of an equality which would have simply meant plunder, bloodshed, and misrule.

Yet, let us not be prematurely confident. Romanism shakes its clenched fist at liberty in every form, resolved on exasperating the Republic to deeds of bloodshed; while the latter, though exhibiting in general wonderful self-restraint, sometimes seems on the point of accepting a challenge, in which "Death to the priesthood!" would be the gathering cry. In April of the present year (1879), a monk preached

in a provincial cathedral, and in his sermon attacked lay teaching. A group immediately gathered round him in the church, and began the "Marseillaise." In the midst of the confusion, a voice was heard "Vive la Commune!"

One man lighted a cigar; another shook his fist at the preacher, shouting "Down with the priests!" An official present stepped forward and requested the preacher to stop. The danger of violence was imminent; but the parties seem to have retired scowling at each other.

The Municipal Council of Paris has recently passed a singular decree,—striking out "religious music" from its prize competitions. The report of their committee runs thus—

"Your Committee, gentlemen, think that religious art has had its day. It reached the height of grandeur with S. Bach, Handel, and Haydn, because those men of genius knew how to express and convey human passions while dealing with imaginary beings. The more the extent of human knowledge increases, the more this art is incompatible, on account of what it expresses, with the scientific spirit and free thought of our age; the Municipal Council of Paris ought not to encourage it, and we propose to you, therefore, to exclude from competition religious music in all its forms. We understand by religious music, not only church music, properly so called, that is to say, every musical composition having words that belong to the domain of liturgy, but also the *Oratorio*, which the old commission, far from excluding, held up as a model for competitors to follow."

This decree has been represented by some newspapers as a return to the atheism of the first revolution. Possibly it carries no such meaning in the strange sentences just quoted. Sacred music is with these authorities associated with the Church of Rome; and they know how by means of it the priesthood is trying once more to get the ear of France. They say, therefore, We will have nothing to do with it, as part of a competition which draws upon our funds. They who wish it may have it for themselves without us. There may not be any infidel dislike of religion in all this; there may only be the dread of an art which has been so often perverted to evil ends, and made use of in the reactionary tactics of the Church of Rome.

We wish that the municipality would go for itself and hear the sacred songs at Belleville, or Ornano, or La Villette, or Batignolles. They would not hear a performance, an oratorio, or a piece of "religious art," or anything belonging to "the domain of liturgy." They would not hear anything, perhaps, regarding which they might think it worth their while either to give or refuse prizes; but they would hear something that would not "restrain freedom," but speak its praises; something which even their "revolutionary logic," as it has been called, could not condemn: something which was not the utterance of priest-

craft nor the symbol of ecclesiastical domination: something altogether unlike, both in melody and sentiment, the artificial sounds with which men thought to please God and to soothe their spirits into the dreamy unrealities of musical ritualism. Even the municipal dignitaries of the city,—communistic as their opinions are,—would not feel aggrieved by the simplicities of such a hymn as this,—

> "Oh, que ton joug est facile !
> Oh, combien j'aime ta loi !
> D'un triste et rude esclavage
> Affranchi par Jésus-Christ,
> J'ai part à son héritage
> Au secours de son Esprit
> Au lieu d'un Maitre sévère
> Prêt à juger et punir,
> Je sers le plus tendre Père,
> Toujours prêt à me bénir."

But whatever their impressions might be, the "sweet singers" of the Mission would neither feel angry at their contempt, nor elated at their applause. A music-prize may be a great thing to the frequenters of cathedral concerts, or the composers for a ritualistic orchestra; it would be nothing to the happy choristers of Bercy or Grenelle.

CHAPTER IV.

WIDER EXPANSION.

WE need not boast nor exaggerate; yet we may not despise the day of small things. Paris is not changed in a year; yet impressions may be made which begin immediately to tell upon the community. The second annual report (1873) is full of interest.

The labourers are few; yet even one labourer tells: and without these labourers Paris would be poorer and worse. There are about 500 city missionaries in London. They may produce but little apparent impression; but their work tells in hundreds of unknown ways, and London would be darker if they were withdrawn.

Thus let us deal with the Paris work; and rejoice that within two years it has done something which will last eternally.

The French officials and the police force have not only shown all courtesy, but acknowledged the

influence of the work. A Commissary of police remarked, "We cannot but welcome you to our quarter: you are coming to do our work, to labour with us for the order and morality of the community." This was a testimony worth having.

While the police recognise the influence of the work on the morals of the city, other outsiders are no less observant. Mr. M'All was in treaty for a new room. The *concierge* had attended some of the meetings, and the landlady had heard of them. "I quite understand your object," she said;—"they say you are the people that are not of any religion," meaning not preaching the religion of a sect. The concierge struck in with a commendation less negative, and, while expressing his desire that we should have our station there, said,—"*C'est le vrai Christianisme.*" Yes; it is Christianity,—not a Church or sect or party that is preached; and it is the reception of this that is telling on the population. The good news, in all their freeness, as that which alone can save the mechanic of London or the ouvrier of Paris; it is this that has opened eyes, and won hearts from sin. God's great love in Christ is what these poor communists never heard before. Their religion,—if they had any,—was the religion of terror and of money, not that of love and Divine generosity; the religion of the confessional, or the crucifix, or the

priest. True Christianity! They had not seen it anywhere. False Christianity! They had seen it everywhere. Up till this time they had not known that true religion rests on *grace*, and that the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ really cares for the men of the pavement and the barricade.

The soldiers come to hear; and one of them, attending one of the stations in 1872, thus writes to Mr. M'All. His idea of the work is briefly given thus:—"*La rude mais glorieuse tâche que vous avez entreprise au sein du quartier le plus dépravé de Paris.*" He tells of the void which he felt in his heart, and the desire to converse on the true way of filling that void. Thus he ends:—"*Je termine ma petite lettre en faisant des vœux pour que les efforts que vous faites soient couronnés d'un plein succès. Que Dieu vous donne en à compte de la recompense qu'il promet à ceux qui lui gagnent des âmes, les bénédictions les plus abondantes.*" The Grenelle station, close by the vast Ecole Militaire, has been specially successful in attracting soldiers.

The *ateliers* surrounding the *La Chapelle* station have been visited, and the workmen invited to the meeting. They crowded into the large and well-situated room, and the opening service was "singularly interesting." The district is very populous,

but very destitute spiritually; and the deep seriousness of the audience was most striking. The overflowing room, week after week, showed the interest and appreciation. Every class of the community seems accessible, as the reports show, and the work is everywhere spoken about, but not spoken against, save by the priesthood, whose words do little harm.*

The question of giving pecuniary aid to the needy has frequently come up, almost from the first, and the decision wisely arrived at was, that this should be done with great caution, and only in extreme cases, after scrupulous inquiry. Indeed, had there been anything like lavish giving, it would have injured the Mission immensely, by associating with it what the enemies would have called religious

* In reading the accounts which these reports give us of the listening ears and open doors in Paris, one is led to contrast the state of things here noted with that which Mr. Robert Haldane describes, now more than sixty years ago. He speaks of Paris not only as "involved in Egyptian darkness," but as almost hopeless. "I soon perceived that I had no means of furthering my journey in that great metropolis." Not only so, but he furnishes us with another contrast,—the opposition of the French pastors to the intrusion of strangers. A remonstrance against the Continental Society for sending preachers into the parishes of other ministers was got up in Paris and signed by Lutheran and Reformed Pastors, as well as peers of France, members of the Chambers, and even agents of the British and Foreign Bible Society. To this singular remonstrance Mr. Haldane wrote an able reply, maintaining the right of evangelists to enter in at every open door.

bribery. All this has been carefully avoided, and yet the destitute have not been overlooked.

The *students'* quarter, or *Quartier Latin*, has not been overlooked. It is a district noted for irreligion and atheism; but the effort was successful, and the station in the *Rue Monge* was so crowded that a larger room had to be obtained. Here the educated classes were brought to listen to the Gospel, and here M. Rosseeuw St. Hilaire, for many years a Sorbonne Professor, gave effectual help.

During the second year no less than 1019 meetings were held, of which Mr. M'All conducted more than 500 himself. This of itself speaks to the very great amount of labour which this Mission involves. There is not only the weekly arranging for the now twenty-three stations, and sending the due intimations to the different parties, but there is the actual conducting of the meetings night after night. Mr. M'All now has his anxieties and labours somewhat lightened by his colleagues, M. Rouilly and Mr. Dodds; but still there is work enough to fill the hands of many more. To arrange for 1019 meetings must have involved immense trouble and toil; but now to arrange for 2788 is quite an over-burden, even for three superintendents, and to conduct even the half of these night after night would require not three men, but ten. To most ministers at home the

idea of arranging for 2000 meetings in a year, and conducting even the fourth of these, would be quite alarming. If proposed to any minister, it would not be undertaken by one in a thousand; and if undertaken, it would be pronounced "killing work." No such amount of labour is laid upon our city missionaries; and it ought to startle the Churches to think of the "heat and burden" which the Parisian labourers have to endure. When, moreover, the immense distances and the late hours are remembered, the amount of the fatigue will be somewhat realised. The two, four, or six miles of weary omnibus and tramway travel might not seem so oppressive were it not for the hours at which these meetings must be held in order to suit the motley audience. In a city like Edinburgh or Glasgow, we get home from our meetings seldom much later than nine. But in Paris it is ten, or eleven, or even twelve o'clock (if the conveyances happen to be full) ere the tired missionary reaches his dwelling. Rowland Hill used humorously to give as his receipt for making a long-lived minister,—"Preach three times every Sabbath, and every evening in the week." But this is something more: and it ought to trouble us in our ease at home to remember these labours. It should also awaken a deeper interest in the Paris Mission than we have ever taken.

John Berridge, of Everton, in the last century, is said to have preached twelve times a-week. But then this was not continuous work, but only when he went on his missionary tours. Grimshaw, of Haworth, regarded it as an idle week in which he preached less than a dozen times; and sometimes he has been known to mount up to thirty. Whitefield in one of his letters writes: "I preached nine times a-week: the people were all attention, as hearing for eternity;" and in another letter he uses this figure regarding his work: "I am hunting for poor lost sinners in these ungospelised wilds." Probably the French pastors, like many among ourselves, have not been accustomed to such an enormous amount of work, and may be afraid of overtaxing their strength. But I am persuaded that the more they throw themselves into this great evangelising work, the more will they be surprised at the amount of labour which they are able to undergo. There are noble men among them worthy of their sires, whom we shall not name, lest in our ignorance we should omit some of the worthiest. But there they are. They are to be the evangelists of the land. It is to them we look for setting France on fire: and the fire which they kindle will not be that of politics or passion, not of sedition or socialism, but of Christian fervour and love.

True, Mr. M'All and his colleagues have not to conduct the whole of each of these meetings. They have the valuable help of the French pastors, who have thrown themselves so heartily into the work, without jealousy or prejudice; but still the chief part of the conducting of these meetings rests upon Mr. M'All and his colleagues. Each night of the week (save Saturday) their hands are full. They have no time for dinners, or parties, or sight-seeings, or even quiet family recreation. Each day brings the work of arranging, or visiting, or receiving callers, and each night brings the labour of the meetings,—sometimes two, or even more. There is no folding of the hands nor eating the bread of idleness. How long this may last, one would not like to guess. But if there should be a break-down of the over-wrought labourers, we should not be taken by surprise. Are there not ten or twenty of our zealous young men who will offer themselves for such a field? A field so large, so needy, so full of interest, and so close at hand!

The nature of these meetings is thus stated in the second report:—"In every service on the Sunday, and on every week-day evening, at every station, the Bible is read first of all; and read avowedly as God's Word. Every meeting, without exception, from the beginning of the Mission, has

been conducted with the direct aim of bringing the Bible as God's Word, and the atoning Saviour as the sinner's only refuge, before our hearers. For what other purpose did we quit our congregation, our friends, our English home?"

The political ferments of the years succeeding the retirement of the Prussian army; the unsettled and angry tone of society at that time; the uncertainties of political parties and rival statesmen; the dread of renewed turbulence and massacre;—these naturally produced anxiety, which was not at once allayed; and the forebodings of even true friends, forecasting evil and predicting the speedy arrest of evangelising liberty, could not but raise misgivings in the minds of the labourers.

But by the end of 1873 all these fears passed away, and Mr. M'All could congratulate the Mission on the permanence of the footing obtained. The permission during that year, given by the municipal authorities to open new stations was most gratifying; and the unsolicited assurance on the part of these authorities of willingness to license other stations, removed all anxieties and uncertainties; the more so because it was then ascertained that the previous stations had been carefully examined and reported on to Government. The absence of all politics and controversy satisfied the rulers of France that these

meetings were not dangerous associations; and the reports of the police that a quieter neighbourhood was the unfailing result of the establishment of each successive station, inclined them greatly to favour the extension which thus promised, if not to supersede, at least to lessen greatly the necessity for their interference. They saw that the Protestant minister was doing what neither the police nor the priest could accomplish.

As to the *young*, it is interesting to know how the work advances. We have learned by the report for 1878 that about 3000 of them were under instruction. But this does not lessen the interest with which we read of the juvenile work in its earlier stages. In 1872, the Sabbath school at the Faubourg St. Antoine numbered 100 scholars; and no less than seven such schools are reported along with this, numbering about 350 children, with upwards of 20 teachers. The children's holiday afternoon meetings (four of which were then held every Thursday), and the classes for teaching English to the workmen, were numerously attended. There were also special services for young women at no less than three stations.

The report for the year (1872) contains the following statement, which, both as a brief review of the past and an appeal for the future, will interest our readers :—

"During the year, we have been enabled to double the number of stations, besides enlarging several of the older ones. The number of sittings (chairs) is raised from 515 to 1056. At this moment, urgent appeals are before us for the immediate planting of two other stations in outlying districts inhabited by the labouring poor, and remote from existing evangelical agencies. In each of these quarters there are a few residents who earnestly desire the Gospel for themselves and their neighbours. Who would not desire to respond to such a call? The lack of additional helpers is our main difficulty in the case. But, for one of these districts, the services of our excellent co-worker, Mr. J. G. Alexander, of the Society of Friends, will be available on his expected return to Paris. In order to our entering on further openings, as well as effectively to sustain present operations, the entire services of at least one well-qualified fellow-labourer are indispensable. We are full of hope that this pressing want is about to be supplied.

"A few words will be sufficient with respect to the older stations. At Belleville, Ménilmontant, and Montmartre, the meetings have been carried on with unbroken regularity and with an increased attendance. The number of constant hearers at each place is much larger than formerly; and in the case of a considerable number of these, we believe that the good seed has fallen into good ground. Especially at Montmartre and at Ménilmontant, we have been permitted to rejoice over one and another brought under the power of a Saviour's love. Some of these have joined neighbouring congregations. Among them are several persons of superior position and culture, who state that, when they first entered our rooms, the name which is now most precious to them was despised or even hated. In addition to these more marked cases, we believe that the Divine Spirit has been gently working on many hearts. Not a few of our hearers are such as had been secretly longing to discover some healing balm, some refuge for the soul. Their

experience, though not taking the sudden and striking form, is not less real and decisive. Even the countenance comes to wear an impress which silently testifies of the transforming power of the Gospel. Friends from England, visiting our stations at successive intervals, have recognised the same faces, but have remarked this visible change, telling of the ameliorating influence. While thus encouraged, we crave the fervent prayer of all our Christian brethren that the number of true converts may be multiplied a hundredfold.

"The station in the Faubourg St. Antoine was in its infancy at the date of last report. A few days ago, we gave, according to our custom, a tea meeting to the regular attendants, in commemoration of the first anniversary of the opening. 120 persons were present. We were enabled to review the year's history of the place with encouragement and gratitude to God. Dr. Fisch, who kindly helps us there, and others gave appropriate addresses. It was a happy evening. At each of these social gatherings the evidences of grateful feeling have been truly cheering. At Ménilmontant, last spring, an *ouvrier* said, 'We are your family. You have united us all here as one great family.'"

The finances of the Mission at this time are thus briefly and satisfactorily referred to :—

"The financial position of the Mission is in every way satisfactory. With gratitude to Him who disposes His people to sustain effort for the extension of His kingdom, we have to record that the entire sum acknowledged on the balance-sheet has been contributed *without one solitary application on our part* throughout the year. As we before remarked, a considerable balance in hand is indispensable in order to shield the Mission from liability to sudden collapse. Without it, even a partial cessation of contributions for a short time would render it impossible to meet the heavy rental of the rooms. Happily, Christian liberality has kept pace with the more than doubled

requirements, and the balance is preserved and increased. Though the Mission is conducted by honorary workers, so that *the whole amount subscribed goes, unabated, to its direct sustentation,* the items of rental, furnishing mission-rooms, incidentals, &c., are, of necessity, constantly increasing. More than this, the enlarged operations have rendered necessary an expenditure for the board of some of the helpers, together with payments, in some instances, for door-keeping and for time which our friends would gladly devote freely, were it in their power to do so. To these liabilities must be added prospectively the stipend of an evangelist as co-worker, so urgently needed. Hence the pecuniary requirements for the coming year must necessarily be, even without any extension of the field of effort, considerably in advance of the past. We believe that we shall not be disappointed in trusting for all that the enterprise thus needs to the free-will offerings of loving hearts."

I now give the "one or two suggestive incidents" which the report contains. For, after all, these are the things which indicate the real fruit. They are indeed but specimens; still, they are representatives of a considerable circle,—a circle much wider than we have any idea of. Truth is vital, and the Word of God is a living word; quickening many whom we know, and many more whom we do not know; but who have not the less powerfully and permanently been reached by the "quick and powerful word:"—

"A respectable *ouvrier* of middle age commenced attendance at —— station early in 1872. After a time, we noticed his evidently deepening interest; indeed his whole aspect bespoke an ameliorating influence. He became an eager reader of the

books in our lending library. At last, he was induced to tell us the state of his mind. Before attending the réunions, he had been full of sceptical doubts. Renan's 'Vie de Jésus,' especially, had gained great hold upon him. Now, he stated, he had come to see that these were only sophistical evasions of the truth, and that the reality of religion was to be found in the Gospel. The French translation of Dr. Hanna's 'Last Days of our Lord's Passion' (kindly supplied, with other excellent books, by Mr. R. A. Macfie, M.P.) interested him. One day, no book apparently suitable for him could be found. He took home, however, one intended for the young, containing the touching account of a little child's piety and happy death. On returning it, he feelingly expressed his admiration, saying, 'Il faut que nous devenions tous comme de petits enfants.' We constantly see this worthy friend, and have no doubt that he has placed his whole trust in Christ.

"Another *ouvrier* who, in his boyhood, had known something of the Gospel in the remote department of ——, came to our —— room on the opening evening, and has attended, with his family, ever since. He expresses great thankfulness that we were led to his neighbourhood. 'You have brought back to my memory,' he has repeatedly said, 'those early teachings respecting Jesus as the only Mediator between God and man, of which I had nearly lost sight; and I intend, by God's help, to walk in that way to the end of my days.'

"The cases of an aged mother and her son, a man in the prime of life, have caused us great joy. They have attended our —— room for a year and a-half. Both testify that the faithful words spoken there by various Christian friends have brought new life and blessedness to their heart. The following are a few of the son's expressions, related to us by a Christian lady:—'Voilà ce qu'il me faut, c'est de savoir que j'ai un Sauveur parfait. Maintenant, quoiqu'il arrive, je ne crains rien, puisque Dieu me garde. Je sais qu'il m'aime; cela me suffit. J'avais besoin depuis longtemps de connaître la vérité;

maintenant je l'ai trouvée.' To another friend he said, 'Unhappily, I am no speaker; or I should long to tell all the people at —— [our station] what blessedness I have found.'

"At the same station, a descendant of the Vaudois of Piedmont, who had long lived in unconcern, was awakened to the realities of religion, and is now a respected member of one of the Evangelical Churches in Paris. Two ladies, also, who had adopted deistical views, and, as they stated, had come to dislike the mention of the name of Jesus, now esteem that name above all others.

"A shoemaker stated that, before the opening of our —— room, he was utterly careless respecting religion. Since coming to live in Paris, he had disregarded the teachings received in his early days. 'Now,' said he, 'I and my wife are like children at school who look forward to the holidays. On Thursday, we say, "Only two days more, then Sunday will be here; then —— evening follows quickly; and now we have —— in addition"' (referring to a new station not far distant).

"May 17.—Delighted to hear from a Christian *ouvrier* that he and one or two of his friends were commencing little meetings on the model of ours in their houses. Gave him a few pictures to ornament the walls. Speaking of these pictures from England, mostly illustrative of Scripture History, which give an air of cheerfulness to all our rooms, our kind friend Miss Blundell said, 'Every one of these pictures seems to say to the people, "I love you."'

June 13.—A poor woman at —— burst into tears on hearing the simple prayer at the close of the meeting. Probably she had never heard a prayer offered in her own language before. She has been a most attentive hearer ever since.

"Dec. 18.—A boy in the children's meeting at —— when the question was put, 'What is it that makes us love our parents?' replied, 'C'est parce qu'ils remplacent Dieu pour nous.'

"The following incidents are examples of the new interest awakened on reading the Bible for the first time.

"An *ouvrier* borrowed a Bible, his countenance beaming with pleasure as he carried it home. At the fortnight's end (the time for which it was lent), he brought it back to us, saying, 'I have not had time to read all, only the chief parts; but it is a most interesting book. All I can do is to thank you heartily for the loan of it.' We said, 'Take it again for another fortnight.' He hesitated, saying that he feared he might deprive some one else of the opportunity of reading it. We reassured him, and he again took it. At the second fortnight's end, he once more offered to return the book, with many thanks. We received it from him; then, knowing him to be very poor (though we rarely *give* Bibles, thinking it better to lend them), we sent it to him as a gift. His eyes filled with tears on receiving it. Since then, nearly every time we see him, he says, 'Oh! comme il est bon, votre cadeau! Je le lis toujours.'

"A woman from Lorraine borrowed a New Testament in German at our —— room. She, too, after the fortnight, returned it, saying, 'It is the most interesting book I ever read in my life. I had no idea there was so good a book in existence. I never read it before. I have put my little ones to bed early and sat up late and risen before the others to read it; and now my husband has become interested in it too.' Though very poor, she was delighted to obtain from us a German Bible in large type at the reduced price at which the National Bible Society of Scotland enables us to supply the Scriptures in special cases.

"We often meet with instances, also, of the value set by the people upon the Scripture Portions, so kindly supplied by the conductors of the Bible Stand, Crystal Palace. A journeyman painter, who had frequented our meetings at Belleville, was leaving Paris to seek work in the provinces. One of our helpers called at his little room to say good-bye. In a corner of the small bag which he had prepared for his journey, he showed

her, carefully arranged, the four Gospels, Acts and Romans. 'There,' said he, 'is the store of comfort I shall carry along with me.' He has since written several beautiful letters, assuring us that, amidst all his difficulties, he had found an unfailing help in looking to the God and Saviour of whom those little books taught him.

"Riding in the omnibus, one day, we gave (as we do often) a Portion, John's Gospel, to the conductor. Being somewhat at leisure, he immediately began to read it earnestly. After a little time, he said, 'This is an excellent book that you have given me.' At the end of the ride, he renewed his thanks, saying, 'This is, indeed, a good book; I wish that every one had such a book to read.'

"Kind words are often spoken by the *ouvriers* when shaking hands with us at the doors after the meetings. At the Rue Monge station, for example, a fine young man grasped our hand saying, 'Déjà un frère.' Another said, 'Bon soir, monsieur—ah non !—je ne veux pas dire, monsieur, je dis, mon ami.' Another said, only a few nights ago, at Montmartre, 'You must often be very tired at nights; but I should think that your sleep is very sweet afterwards, when you reflect that you have spent the day in trying to do good to us French people.'"

One prizes, and likes to preserve these fragments thus picked up, and presented to us in reports. To many of my readers, I am sure these notes will be quite new; for the reports of the Mission's early years are quite out of print; and besides it is only recently that a large portion of the public has really begun to be interested in the work.

The modest undemonstrative way in which the Gospel has entered Paris and taken possession of

the strongholds of evil has sometimes made us wonder. In Reformation days all was different. It aroused the priesthood; it alarmed the court; it stirred the whole city; it led to imprisonment, banishment, death. Berquin, Lefevre, Farel, Calvin cannot be tolerated. They must flee or die. "It is hardly possible," writes Roussel to Farel, "without peril of life, to confess Christ purely." Berquin is arrested, set free, and again arrested, because he preached, in the cottages of his estate, *salvation by Christ alone.* With the Testament in his hand, he wanders over the country round Abbeville, the banks of the Somme, the towns, manors, and fields of Artois and Picardy, scattering the seed of the Word. "Faith alone justifies" is his watch-word. That is his condemnation. He must go to the stake. Margaret of Navarre may interfere, and the evangelist may be set free,—but it is only for a season.

In those days the Gospel raised commotions everywhere,—chiefly because the priesthood was in power, and the Pope could order kings to exterminate heresy. At present it raises no tumult; yet it is the same Gospel and the same Bible with which our modern evangelists are going forth. The spirit of the age is against priestcraft; and that spirit, though often identified with unbelief, is, at present

at least, fairer and more tolerant. Thus "the earth helps the woman," and swallows up the flood, which otherwise would have swept away the truth and its witnesses. The entrance of the Gospel, in this peaceful way, is matter of congratulation. No Christian man in preaching the Gospel wishes to raise a tumult; and he is thankful when the Word goes upon its way, and accomplishes its end without noise or opposition. The history of the past eight years is an interesting study in this respect. God has smoothed the way for His quiet, trustful messengers.

It was well that this movement came from England, whose sympathy with the suffering Parisians had nobly shown itself, when, as soon as the siege was raised, she poured into the city her ample stores. The Parisian priesthood had taken care to lay up against the evil day; and were feasting on their hoarded luxuries, when the citizens were starving. This was one thing which favoured the Gospel. But its coming from England favoured it still more. Dr. Merle d'Aubigné has remarked: "Strasburg is the main bridge by which German ideas enter France, and French ideas make their way into Germany."* But had the Gospel crossed from the right to the left

* "Reformation in the Time of Calvin," vol. i. p. 455.

bank of the Rhine in 1872; in other words, had it come to Paris from Germany, it would certainly have been rejected. It came, however, in God's gracious providence, from England, and was welcomed. For England, once an enemy, was now the friend of France, and had helped her in the day of her calamity. Thus God, when He purposes to send to a people the Gospel of His grace, removes barriers, and disarms resistance. Everything had failed to meet the atheism and sacerdotalism and licentiousness of France; the tidings of His own free love in Christ had not yet been tried. He sent them, and like the breath of spring, they found their way into the great metropolis of pleasure and unbelief.

Perhaps M. Renan would say that this only shows French "facility for embracing noble chimeras." Be it so. A "*noble* chimera" may be worth trying, in a city where so many *ignoble* ones have come and gone, without producing anything save social disorder and national adversity. That which a sceptic may deem a chimera or an illusion may prove to be a revelation from God;—not a new revelation, but the old revelation of His own free love in the gift of His Son to man.

The vital forces which are now at work in Paris are those of which the "brilliant Frenchman"

knows nothing, and which his fellow-Academicians would not take into their calculations in forecasting the prospects of their country. Yet there they are: —not destructive, but constructive; not explosive, but cementive; silently telling upon thousands;—directly on many, indirectly on many more;—more likely to "create great men, and to cast medallions that will go down to posterity" than those which philosophy has tried for a century and more. "Good humour in facing death" is the utmost of a scientific death-bed; but the life-message, now spreading through Paris, professes to give more than this. The *savoir vivre* which the Gospel produces is not frivolity or self-indulgence; not the βίος ἀβίωτος of the worldling; not the "Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die" of the sensualist; but the tranquil earnestness of him who spoke but what he lived,—"None of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself; for whether we live we live unto the Lord, and whether we die we die unto the Lord." M. Renan may announce to the Academy that "reason triumphs over death;" but, when he was making this boast, the *ouvriers* of Paris were, in their simplicity, listening to a Gospel which provides a surer victory. He may point to the Academy as the regenerator of France, and assure his fellow-Academicians that "for a long time to come they

alone will be able to utter the phrases that deserve to live for ever;" but a process is meanwhile going on which will introduce new phrases which may live as long as these. He may be convinced that the "collaboration" of the Academy is necessary for all that is glorious;—"for of that which is done without the aid of the Athenians glory takes no heed;"—but there is such a thing as "the foolishness of preaching," and it is mightier than the wisdom of Athens or of Paris. The M'All Mission and the "collaboration" of the Academy are very different things; but there is a power in the former which the latter knows not,—the power of moving souls, and "softening human rock-work into men." *

* The references in these closing paragraphs are to M. Renan's recent address (April, 1879) to the French Academy, in which he pronounced a eulogy on M. Claude Bernard, whom he was chosen to succeed.

CHAPTER V.

THE THIRD YEAR AND ITS INCIDENTS.

THUS writes a modern author some fifty years ago :—" One should conquer the world, not to enthrone a name but an idea; for ideas exist for ever; amid the wreck of creeds, the crash of empires, French revolutions, English reforms, Catholicism in agony, Protestantism in convulsions, discordant Europe demands the key-note which none can sound."

The enthronisation of an " idea " might be no better than that of a " name,"—unless the " idea " were worth enthroning,—in other words, unless it were *Divine.* What Europe wants is certainly a "key-note;" but we are not prepared to add "which none can sound." It has often been sounded; and Europe has treated it as the idle wind. It is now sounded again, whether men will hear or whether they will forbear. That key-note came forth from the cross 1800 years ago; and it is still as definite

as ever,—"Through this Man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins." It was this key-note which "discordant" Paris demanded; and it is this that is now sounding through its boulevards and faubourgs, touching the hearts of thousands.

The good news of one who, while He hates the sin, loves the sinner, and has no pleasure in his death; who spared not His Son that He might spare even the worst criminal that breathes the air, not of France only, but of the earth; who sends down from His throne His free absolution to every one who believeth, independent of Church or priesthood, and without regard either to merit or money;—this is the key-note which has been sounded in Paris, and which hundreds are recognising as the one great "idea" which "exists for ever," and by the reception of which the discordant elements of broken humanity are to be re-knit in abiding gladness.

The third year's report (1874) shows us how all this is beginning to be realised, and how the Gospel is continuing to tell. Paris is learning, not only that there is a God and a Christ; but that "God is love," and that this Christ is "the Saviour of the world."

A striking letter of the Sorbonne Professor, M. Rosseeuw St. Hilaire, prefaces the report; and this document is too valuable not to be preserved

entire. It is dated "Paris, 10th Decr., 1874," and runs thus :—

"Like the Rev. Thomas Binney, I am happy to be called to record my testimony in favour of a work with which every Christian in France ought to account it a privilege to associate himself, in rendering to its excellent founder, the Rev. R. W. M'All, the tribute of gratitude and affection. As a humble but devoted fellow-labourer, during more than a year in this blessed work, to which it has pleased God to grant a success surpassing all that we had ventured to hope for, it is possible that I am so placed as to be able more fully than many others to appreciate the ever-growing sympathy with which simple gospel appeals are received among our people, a people so easy to attract, so difficult to hold steadfast. That which astonishes me in this work, which no one could have ventured to imagine possible before our disasters, but which has found hearts prepared to respond to its appeals, is not its success, nor its extension, but its permanence. Not that we delude ourselves by building too much upon the results already realised. While seeing these listeners so intent, so sympathetic, drinking in so eagerly the words addressed to them, we have need often to remember that, among all these grains, so largely spread, a large portion will be stifled among the thorns or trodden under foot by the passers-by. What have we to do with that? We are sowers, not reapers. A large number of these grains have, beyond doubt, fallen into the good ground. Shall we the less praise our Lord if it shall be given to others to enter into our labours, and there, where we have sown in tears, to reap with songs of triumph?

"Our excellent brother, Mr. M'All, has laid before his brethren in Britain, with courageous frankness, the ever-increasing exigences of his work. These needs increase with the success. Can we be surprised at this, or shall we complain of it?

"Side by side with 'ces bons anglais,' as the people style them in our suburbs, there is need also of Frenchmen, to speak from a closer acquaintance with them, to a French auditory. In addition to the one or two evangelists sustained by this English mission, and who fulfil their work with devotion and success, there is need also for volunteers from among the laity; for the pastors of Paris are too much pre-engaged to take a part regularly in this work, which has, however, their entire sympathy. There is need for, at least, one such helper for each station; and we are, in all, three—I say it with shame and grief—three in this vast city; and of these three, two, including the writer, are now, through having spoken beyond their strength, forced to be silent. This state of things cannot go onward. With the eleventh station, which has just been opened, the need for further aid, especially paid and regular, makes itself felt more and more every day. The Lord sent recently to Mr. M'All two most valuable and devoted auxiliaries, who could replace the two volunteers laid aside by illness, but, in order that their time and strength might be wholly given to the work, it would be necessary to provide them with the means of support; and the present state of the mission fund does not allow of this.

"Hence, as a French Christian, quite ready to return to the duties of this admirable work so soon as God permits me, I venture to address myself to my dear brethren, the Christians of Britain, whose liberality I have many times proved, in order to urge them to put forth a new effort to sustain this work, which has a place in their hearts and in their prayers. God grants us success. Do you, then, dear brethren, give us the material help we need, and you will thus be workers together with God in this work, which spreads from day to day. This will form an additional link between our two countries, which political events might, in a measure, estrange, but which faith in Christ would unite. It is to you that we already owe our Revival of 1830, which came from London to Paris by way of

Geneva, in which city the excellent Robert Haldane was the means of introducing it. May it be that we shall owe, on this occasion, to Britain, thanks to the courageous initiative of our dear brother, Mr. M'All, a second Revival, at once more deep and more durable, which shall live after all those who initiated it have passed away!"

After stating that the numbers in regular attendance at the adult meetings have averaged 2000 per week, and at the juvenile gatherings five or six hundred, Mr. M'All gives us some curious bits of intelligence as to the increasing appreciation of his meetings on the part of the authorities; and this after a strict official inquiry. I confess that the following paragraph is to me singularly satisfactory, and I am persuaded that every reader of it will think along with me in this:—

"We have not been without anxieties. From the beginning, we have sought most carefully to avoid all religious controversy, as required by our authorisation from the Government. Yet, during the spring, an attempt was made to represent us as having departed from this rule. The result was a strict official scrutiny of all our meetings; but the inquiry was conducted with the utmost courtesy, and led to a most satisfactory issue. One officer said, 'I admire your large announcements [the calico signs indicating our mission-rooms]. You bid every one welcome to know what you are doing. There cannot be too many such places: you will render good service to Paris by multiplying them as much as possible.' In another instance, a *Commissaire de Police*, in whose district we were about to open a station, said, 'I have just seen my brother-officer at M—— [a distant part of the town where we had

been at work more than two years], and he told me everything respecting your good work. I shall rejoice to aid you to the utmost of my ability.' The words of another *Commissaire*, only a few days ago, were truly striking: 'Your undertaking has my entire sympathy, and I heartily wish you success. You will find it very difficult, the *ouvriers* are so little disposed to care for what is good. Still, amidst so vast a population, some, happily, are open to better influences. You cannot do all the good you would desire, I am sure. *God will do the rest.* You will always find me ready to aid you in any way within my power.'"

Into several of the details of this report I need not enter. They all indicate progress. New stations opened, and old ones enlarged; new workers brought into the field; Sabbath schools established; weekly prayer meetings set on foot; the zealous co-operation of the professors and students of the Ecole Préparatoire de Théologie; number of sittings raised from 1056 to 1610; soldiers' meetings; efforts to reach the students of the University of Paris by means of special services; pecuniary aid from societies and private friends, and specially the Missionary Association of the American Chapel; plans for the occupation of new districts;—these are some of the cheering news which the report contains; but on which we cannot dwell. Not only are Bible classes set a-going; but classes (six in number) for teaching English to the workmen; so that there is not any branch of missionary work,

either among old or young, which has not been considered and carried out.

All kinds of workmen, skilled and unskilled, are coming under the influence of the Bible; and the Scripture "portions" distributed in the halls are producing their genuine results. A journeyman of Belleville who had received these portions thus writes to Mr. M'All from Marseilles in January, 1874:—"I did my very utmost to make myself religious, but I did not know or understand the love of Jesus Christ for sinners. Since I have experienced the blessedness of going to Jesus I am no longer the same man as before. Oh that all who attend your meetings might be penetrated by a sense of the blessedness that is to be found in going to Jesus. *I thank God for the unspeakable goodness which He has shown to so many of my fellow-workmen who have learned in your meetings to know Jesus Christ, His divine Son.*" The testimony which this workman gives as to the numbers of *ouvriers* who have been impressed is very remarkable. He writes as one who knew the facts, and had come in contact with the converts: and who can speak of the genuineness of the change wrought in them. His letter thus gives the idea of a much larger circle being impressed than could be known to Mr. M'All and his fellow-labourers;

and the one sentence which I have italicised contains a piece of good news whose value it is not easy to over-estimate: for it shows that the Mission is not one of show, or talk, or bustle, but a truly evangelical enterprise accomplishing a spiritual end. The above sentence in the painter's letter is all the more remarkable, because when he first went to Mr. M'All's Belleville room he said that he had been told that the society was one for providing work for the unemployed. The true aim of the Mission was explained to him, and he was led no longer to "labour for the meat which perisheth, but for that which endureth unto everlasting life." He came for the earthly; he found the heavenly; though destitute, he asked no pecuniary relief; and when a small sum was given him to pay the entrance fee of a workman's registration society, he returned it as soon as he had got work.

The young soldier already mentioned has had trials to undergo from family opposition; but he thus writes, as one who has found his portion in Christ:—"It was only in Paris when I met you on my way, and heard you speak at Grenelle, that I found what my soul had long been seeking; and I resolved this very evening to write and tell you of my joy. I thank the Lord for having put you in my way to show me the truth, and I pray Him to

give you the satisfaction of seeing other stray sheep return to the fold."

A young married woman came to La Chapelle to purchase a large-sized Bible, that she and her family might read the Word with ease. They were poor, and the price was beyond their means. A kind English visitor made them a gift of one. A few weeks passed, and the wife, at the close of a meeting, asked an interview with Mr. M'All. Speaking to the friends engaged in the work, she said, "It is to you that I am indebted for the knowledge of my Saviour; and my husband thinks with me. Oh, the gift of that precious Book! I assure you we have made a good use of it: we read it together every day." This worthy couple have given up Sunday work. No easy step for a Paris *ouvrier*. Soon after the wife was taken ill, and taken to the hospital. While there she took every occasion to speak a word for Christ to her fellow-sufferers, so that one of them, at least, was led to become a diligent reader of the Bible. Soon after her husband wrote a beautiful letter to Mr. M'All, and makes the following statement, which shows most forcibly the spiritual benefits of the Mission as having for its object nothing less than deliverance from darkness into light: "I am so thoroughly convinced that if you had not come to Paris I should still have been in

darkness, that it was impossible for me not to respond to your touching appeal yesterday evening." He had been asked to give his testimony at the Annual Social Meeting at La Chapelle. "Gladly would I have spoken, but my emotion was so intense that I could only weep. I know that I am nothing in myself; but I know also that I can do all things through Christ. Would that I could make all young men who are about to marry understand that by taking the Bible as their household book, they will have peace in their daily life, and the peace of God in the soul. I wish that I could be useful to you in a work so great, so good, so noble, that you have commenced in this unhappy town of Paris. After our disasters, the people were full of mutual hatred; but through your efforts we have been regenerated, and have gained knowledge of the salvation which is by grace. We know that Christ has done all things for us, so that our life should be a testimony of gratitude and love for the benefits we have received from our Saviour. We rejoice to know that we are not the only ones whom the Lord has taken out of darkness to make them children of light. You cannot see all the fruits of your labours; but we see them, and God sees them." The room in the Boulevard Ornano he regards as his birth-place; and the first meeting there his birthday,

or at least as the turning-point in his spiritual history. At another time he said: "My anniversary will soon be here [the day of his coming to the first meeting]; and I shall bring you such a lovely bouquet of flowers on that day,"—meaning the love and gratitude of his heart to God; and as he spoke he made a circle with his arms as if to gather up within it a multitude of flowers.

In such a Mission it is not the great outline of work that really exhibits its character; nor the full statistics of numbers, names, places; nor the list of subscriptions; nor the references to kind and generous friends. The true illustrations are the *incidents* which are occurring from day to day; the little questions put or remarks made, by those who have been gathered in, or are but inquiring the way. The speeches at public meetings or anniversaries often, we confess, weary us, especially when the speaker substitutes general declamation or well-meant appeal for facts. But when a man gets up who has been upon the spot; who knows his subject well; who has facts at his finger ends without number,—then we are all ear and eye. It is the facts and incidents that we watch for; and it is on them that we found our judgment as to the worthiness of the cause. Little details or casual words or trivial conversations, which at the time perhaps

hardly made an impression; when related simply and without painting, in their proper connection, are the irresistible eloquence that brings the reader or the hearer into truest sympathy with the work pleaded for. It is on this account that I give, almost in full, the following pages of the report, asking special attention to them. I am not trying to make up a book by copying extracts to fill vacant pages. I am rather abridging and condensing. But I should be doing injustice to the cause I advocate if I did not print in full such incidents as the following*:—

"More than two years ago, an old man formerly in the French

* I add in a note the following paragraph regarding the periodicals supplied by generous friends:—

"Could the zealous promoters of the religious magazines *L'Ami de la Maison*, *L'Ami de la Jeunesse*, &c., be witnesses of the great interest and pleasure awakened when these publications are lent to the people to read on entering our rooms, before the meetings begin, they would be greatly encouraged. Omnibus conductors also, the keepers of *bureaux*, &c., on receiving one of the numbers of the admirably conducted '*Ami de la Maison*,' have repeatedly, at the end of a ride, pointed out passages which had struck them with admiration. In various directions, these men look out for us, hoping for some small addition to their store of these publications. It would be impossible to over-estimate the benefit which, under God, the very wide circulation of such a magazine would produce. Copies of the '*Almanach des Publications Populaires*,' supplied to us by the Society of Friends, have also been received everywhere with marked eagerness. The committees of the Religious Tract Society, the Société des Livres Religieux de Toulouse, the Société des Traités Religieux de Paris, and others who have supplied books for our lending libraries, may rest assured that the volumes thus kindly supplied have fallen into the hands of a large number of attentive readers."

marine service, commenced attendance at the Boulevard Ornano. He was then gloomy and dejected, and dissatisfied with his small earnings. He has been a most diligent hearer ever since. Not long ago, one of our friends remarked to him, 'You seem quite contented and cheerful now.' 'Yes,' said he, 'I am as merry as a lark.' 'How comes that? Is it that you have a better employ, so as to gain more money?' 'Oh no,' he replied, 'I am in the very same place, and do not gain a *centime* more. But since I came to the meetings I have found peace of mind; now I am content, everything goes well with me.'

"After a recent service at the Boulevard Ornano, at which Pastor Théodore Monod had spoken, a young *ouvrier*, who often walks from the village of Pantin (several miles distant) to attend the meeting, warmly expressed to us his thankfulness and joy. Some Christian ladies who stood by said, 'Mr. M'All, you do not know what this young man does when he gets home. His old, infirm mother lives with him, and he tries to repeat to her as much as possible of what he has heard.' This was a striking testimony concerning one who, until a few months ago, when he commenced attendance at our room in his own neighbourhood, was ignorant of the nature of the Gospel.

"At our Faubourg St. Antoine station, we had remarked the deep attention of an *ouvrier* and his wife. We learned from them that they had received lasting convictions in that room. During the summer, they had to leave Paris for Lorraine, but promised to write. The following expressions are selected from the wife's letter:—'We have not forgotten the good words which it was our privilege to hear in your meetings, and which have often strengthened and consoled us. We read often in the large book [Bible] which you presented to us, and we contemplate with joy the goodness of God to man, and we pray to Him to remember us in mercy for Jesus Christ's sake. I go back in imagination to the days and hours of your réunions of Faubourg St. Antoine, and I sing sometimes the hymns I there learned. I pray God to preserve your life and health for the

welfare and salvation of other poor sinners like me, for you have brought me to know the way which, for long years, my heart had desired to know. If we never see each other again in this world, I have full confidence that we shall meet in heaven through my Saviour Jesus Christ.'

"In some instances, the hearts of persons in another class than that especially aimed at have, through Divine influence, been reached in our meetings. One Sunday evening in the spring, a lady, among whose relatives are some ecclesiastical dignitaries, entered, for the first time, the —— room, led there by a young friend already an attendant. Pastor Théodore Monod conducted the meeting. His theme was salvation without money and without price. This came upon her as a new discovery. After the service, she said to her friends, 'This is excellent, this is delightful; and what is more, it seems to me to agree with the Bible: but how can I get hold of it for myself?' 'Madame —— [one of our valued workers] will explain everything to you.' By Divine help she did so. The lady wrote in the summer to Mrs. M'All, 'I now find myself happy beyond all expression.' We had the privilege of uniting with her and her young friend in the communion at M. Monod's chapel.

"A household, comprising the principals and one or two business assistants, frequenting the —— station, has afforded us much joy. We have great hope of several of the members; but the mistress has avowed that she has found the Saviour. The first decided indication of serious thought was to purchase the Bible, which she read with eager interest. After a period of doubt and anxiety, a few extremely simple words, spoken by us at the close of an address, brought rest to her spirit. The words were: 'Allez à Jésus-Christ. Allez à lui maintenant. Allez á lui seul.' During a time of affliction, she said to one of our visitors, 'O come, let us return thanks to God together; for now I come to His Word to answer all my questions.' Again and again she and her household have testified, 'Since coming to the réunions, everything is completely changed with us;

everything now is peaceful and happy.' A pleasing evidence of their sense of the value of salvation is afforded in their anxiety to aid us, so far as in their power, in working for the benefit of others.

"One of our excellent visitors bears the following testimony:—'Several of the dear friends who have received the Gospel at —— and —— are now in our congregation [Lutheran]; and I rejoice to testify that they are among the most spiritual and active members of the Church.'

"An intelligent Christian *ouvrier* connected with the railway, bore this testimony, some months ago, respecting general results:—'I, as an *ouvrier*, know well the *ouvriers* of Montmartre. After more than two years during which I have frequented the réunions of Boulevard Ornano, I can testify that a large number of men who, at first, came merely to pass an hour, many of them disbelieving or even secretly mocking at religion, have become *croyants*' (convinced of the truth and reality of the Gospel).

"Another pleasing testimony from an *ouvrier* of Ménilmontant, who has attended almost from the beginning, was this:—'You have taught us Frenchmen some great lessons, things which we could not have believed possible.' 'What things?' 'We used to imagine that the English were egotists, and that they had proud, unbrotherly feelings towards us. Now we find, on the contrary, that they are willing to leave their country and encounter hardship in order to lead us Frenchmen to Jesus.' Lately, on a damp, wintry day, we remarked to him, 'Mais vous voyez que nous autres anglais nous avons emporté avec nous chez vous ici à Paris notre brouillard anglais.' 'Ah, monsieur,' he replied, 'vous avez apporté ici quelque chose de mieux que le brouillard; le vrai bonheur, la connaissance d'une vérité divine; je dois plutôt dire, la bonne nouvelle de l'Evangile.' Pleasing words from one who, until he came to us, was an admirer of Renan! The following words conclude a letter just received from him:—'My heart is full, and longs to

utter the feelings of gratitude which fill it—(1.) towards God, my one Divine Father, (2.) towards Jesus Christ, my one Master and Saviour, (3.) towards the Holy Spirit, the only true Comforter, (4.) towards —— ——, who have quitted position, relatives, friends, country, income, in order to come and announce to us the good news of the gospel.'

"Again and again we have remarked the wonderful power attending a few simple words of prayer, especially prayer for those present, their families, their daily bread, &c. At the Faubourg St. Antoine station, a highly respectable person, present for the first time, remained to ask whether we had a station near the centre of Paris, where she resided. We replied that we much wished to open one there so soon as we should have the means. After saying good-bye, she returned. 'May I venture to ask a favour from you?' she said. 'It is a small thing, and yet it is a very great thing. Pray for me—will you?' The short prayer closing the meeting had reached her heart. Another day, at the same station, two uncouth and rugged *ouvriers* said, on leaving, 'Thank you for the prayer: I never heard anything of that kind before. *You did not leave any of us out.* We shall come again, if it were only to hear you pray to God."

"A young man, at the same station, when wishing us good-bye on returning to Belgium, his native country, said, 'I wished to shake hands with you before leaving. I am glad that ever I came here. *You illustrate all that you say to us by examples taken from life,* so that we can understand it.' He referred to the *narratives* often introduced in the addresses and readings.

"Very recently, the father of a family at Boulevard Ornano was leaving the room with his boy, who carried a large Bible from our lending library. Turning to us, he said, 'I am really ashamed to borrow this book for the fourth time [it was lent for a fortnight on each occasion]; but my boy reads it in the family during the evenings. It is a book requiring great study,

and we try to find out the meaning as well as we can. We make *quite a little school in the house* when I return from my work.'

"We had repeatedly given tracts and Scripture portions to a letter-carrier in Belleville. One day he asked, 'Do you think that Mr. M'All could let me have a complete Bible? I do not wish him to give it, I will buy it. My little girl has learned by heart many passages in the gospel by Luke you gave me. I wish her to have a nice copy of the Bible as her own, that she may be encouraged in the study of that good book.'

"An intelligent young schoolmaster and his wife, only a few weeks after their deep interest had been awakened by the opening of La Chapelle station near their residence, were called away to a government appointment in Algeria. They took with them our parting gift of the Bible, regarding it as *a new-discovered treasure!*

"The following words are from the letter of an *ouvrier* referred to in our last report as overjoyed on receiving a Bible :— 'I believe sincerely. In these hard times, when work is so scarce, I find satisfaction for all my daily wants on repeating with fervour this blessed prayer, "Give us day by day our daily bread." This thought bears me up, and gives me a courage which I could not have believed possible.' At the close of a meeting at Ménilmontant, in the spring, we were shaking hands, as is our custom, with the men. To a negro we said, 'You and I are brothers.' The men around seemed pleased, and the *ouvrier* above referred to, placing his hand on the head of a comrade whom he had induced to accompany him, said, 'Ah ! Mr. M'All, that man has a very black face, and we can't wash it white ; but this man has an excessively hard skull ; nevertheless, let us hope that something good may be forced into it.

"In our little Sunday school at Grenelle was a boy blind from five years of age. He has since been removed to a hospital. He said to his teacher, 'Why do you come only once

a-week to teach us? I wish you would speak to me every day out of the Bible, that good book which I have never seen.' Our friends are teaching English to some of the French children in the same school on a week evening. It is touching to hear their voices blending in such a hymn as

'Jesus loves me,' &c.

which they have learned by heart."

The annual social gatherings,—anniversaries of the opening night,—were not forgotten; and eight stations during the year 1874 held these meetings, so new, yet so interesting to the French people; so fitted to teach the true "equality and fraternity" of which hitherto Paris has had but the name,—the name inscribed everywhere upon its public buildings, the name which is on so many lips and paraded on so many pages, but never understood as that which is brought to light in Christ alone,—"One is your Master, even Christ, and ALL YE ARE BRETHREN." At such social gatherings as these every man,—even the poorest *ouvrier*,—is made to feel the meaning of the Master's words, "All ye are brethren." For at such meetings, ranks seem forgotten, or rather reversed. It is the Master who serves the servant, not the servant the Master. We are told that, during this one year, 1450 persons have taken tea on these occasions, and seemed perfectly at home. The expressions of their gratitude were most touching. At Ménilmontant, the young soldier before referred to re-

marked, on looking round the crowded room, "*C'est maintenant comme dans le premier temps;*" and when asked for an explanation, replied, "*L'Evangile est annoncé aux pauvres.*" "At the same station," says Mr. M'All, "during the Toussaint and the great Fête, which is a complete Vanity Fair, we held a meeting each day with open doors. The respectful attention was very pleasing. The entire attendance during these days was 1700, of whom probably more than 1200 were passing strangers, many of whom had never before heard the Gospel. To each a Scripture 'portion' or a tract was given."

Like leaves from the tree of life, these Scripture "portions" have scattered themselves over France; and we know that they are "for the healing of the nations."

A Book, a true Book, the one true Book, is now making its way over a land where a thousand lies have been believed; and having been believed, have borne their bitter fruit. That Book has what the lies have not,—vitality. It lives and it gives life. The words which it speaks are "spirit and life" (John vi. 63). For God has sent down not merely His *thoughts*, but His *words* to man. Just as we do with one another; we transmit our thoughts by transmitting our words. Thoughts are invisible and inaudible till embodied in words. We must have

the words of the thinker if we would have his thoughts. Bacon would not hand over his immortal thoughts to his amanuensis to be put in words by him; and we should not care to read a page of his "Novum Organum," or at least we should not trust its accuracy, as conveying Bacon's mind, if we knew that it had been thus manipulated. That Infinite Being has not been less careful that His thoughts should be accurately reproduced, and unerringly embodied in language all His own; that we might know exactly what He wished to reveal.

It is the Book containing these heavenly thoughts and these Divine words that has been taking its way, both in whole and in "portions," over France. The words are not perhaps those which modern "culture" would dictate or criticism sanction; but they are divinely chosen, and more thoroughly adapted for their mission than any man would have selected. They are "winged words" in their truest sense, carrying life, not death, in their flight.

Voltaire's *words* have gone over France for a century and more, dropping poison everywhere; the words, as one of his critics writes, "of an imp, not of an angel." But that same France which he poisoned has now got hold of truer, better words, embodying more wondrous thoughts than those with which he fascinated a nation. Are the true words

about to obliterate the false, and make the country of the scoffer a land of believing men? She has tried faith in the false; is she now about to try faith in the true?

Popery has often taken advantage of "used-up" lives, and drawn souls sick of the world, worn out with pleasure, and tired of gaiety, into her snares, by offering a quiet resting-place from riot and vanity and noise in her churches and convents. The gospel of God's free love,—or rather, I should say, the gracious Son of God, is now offering to a used-up nation a resting-place more sure and tranquil than "the Church" ever offered or the priest vouched for,—the bosom of God Himself, with all the free forgiveness and paternal love which that bosom contains, and with all that heaven which descends into the soul of him who accepts the "unspeakable gift."

From many aching, empty hearts in France is now coming up the cry of the prodigal, "I will arise and go to my Father." And God is meeting that sorrowful cry with His own welcome and His own embrace. "When he was yet a great way off his father saw him, and ran and fell upon his neck and kissed him." And if "used-up" France should, like the wanderer, say, "I am not worthy to be called thy son," the free love that kissed the returning wanderer will speak in words not to be mis-

taken: "Bring forth the best robe and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet, and bring hither the fatted calf and kill it; for this my son was dead and is alive again, he was lost and is found."

No doubt infidelity is still strong in the land. It dominates in high places; and there, though not so coarse, is as contemptuous as of old. The Gospel makes inroads on it, but its power cannot be said to be decreasing, nor its subtleties less acceptable to the general mind of the nation. The materials for the "strong delusion" of the last days are everywhere; unbelief may, at any moment, pass into credulity, or credulity into unbelief; each in its own way resulting in delusion; and nothing can stay this, or disinfect the atmosphere, but the one Book of truth, held up in all its unchangeable certainty before the eyes of a restless nation, hitherto tossed about by the conflicting words of superstition and scepticism. An infallible Book is the only anchorage for human uncertainty; for an infallible Book not only severs us from the pretensions of an erring man, and the deceptions of a slippery Church, but links us, both by mind and heart, to an infallible God,—to a Christ in whom are "hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge."

It is this Book of truth that is now offered to

France. If she accepts it she may yet be a noble land. Her future may turn upon her reception or rejection of the present Mission. Renan can do nothing for her. He has faith in nothing save himself. With no future before himself, he can give no future to France. It is the men who have a future, and who know what that future is, that can give a future to others. Unbelief does nothing for a man or a nation; faith does everything. "Thy faith hath saved thee" is as true of a nation as of a man.

CHAPTER VI.

ONWARDS AND OUTWARDS.

MANY things in the biography of Felix Neff resemble what is now going on in Paris and Lyons: only his work chiefly lay in the villages, not in the cities; and his pilgrimages or missionary tours were chiefly on foot, across mountains and torrents and snow-drifts, not in the train or the tramway or the *voiture*. Climbing up to the Alpine hamlets, in rain or snow or sunshine; making his way over rocks amid the dangers of the storm or the avalanche or the deep snow-drift; mounting the slippery glacier which lay in his way, or cutting steps in the ice for the people to reach the chapel; journeying to La Grave, far up among the ridges of the Cottian Alps, beyond the source of the Durance, and almost inaccessible in winter;—these are the things which give romance to the missionary-life of the Genevan evangelist.

Can we imagine any contrast greater than that

between this wild mountain-life and that of the Parisian workers, moving from day to day through the streets and lanes of a crowded city, and holding their meetings in the close rooms of some noisy boulevard or dull *passage?*

Yet the work is very much the same; and it is interesting to find Neff using the word *réunion* to designate his meetings. In travelling from place to place he used to converse with all he met with by the way, on the matters of eternity. In the towns or villages he visited he would hold a *réunion;* preaching and expounding; yet seeking no ends of his own, nor trying to found a sect, but always co-operating with the pastors: and we find the police authorities supporting him. Thus he writes:—"The pastors of M—— and C—— presented a petition to the Government against religious societies, on the ground that they disturbed both the peace of the Church and civil order. A pastor of Berne was summoned to give evidence on this subject. He stated that there was nothing sectarian among the people in question; that they were devout Christians, who endeavoured mutually to improve each other; and that the best and surest way to avoid divisions was to leave them in peace. One of the directors of the central police was then sent to take cognisance of the matter. He came to Montier and

went to the prayer meeting. He appeared thoughtful, and on being asked by a companion what he thought of it, he replied,—'One thing alone distresses me.' When asked what it was, 'It is,' he said, 'that there are not such *réunions* held in every province throughout the canton.'"

The Alpine mission of Neff was a nobly aggressive one. It pressed forward in all directions, over valley and mountain, city and village, bearing aloft the banner of the good news, and carrying life wherever the intrepid standard-bearer went on his mighty errand.

It is hardly correct to call the Paris Mission an "aggressive" one. It is more attractive than aggressive.

The difficulties which we feel in our own large cities of "drawing out" the people, and "working up" a station, are unknown to the labourers in France. The people come without compulsion or persuasion. "Compel them to come in" is hardly a suitable motto for these halls: but rather, "Nations that knew not thee shall run unto thee" (Isa. lv. 5); or, "All the people ran together unto them, greatly wondering" (Acts iii. 11).

I mentioned in a former chapter the case of a journeyman painter of Belleville who at one of the meetings had been arrested, and subsequently brought

out of darkness into light. This *ouvrier* lives in a crowded *passage*, where the dark and the needy and the evil dwell. He has "found the Messias" for himself, and he must tell it, or at least get it told, to others. He cannot rest till he has a meeting in his own centre: and he finds many more equally earnest with himself. The following letter is a better indication of the peculiar state of the Parisian *ouvriers* than many an important incident. It is addressed to "Mr. and Mrs. M'All:"—"It is with the greatest respect, and at the desire of more than a hundred residents of my *passage* [an avenue crowded with small dwellings], that I send you these few lines. *More than a hundred persons* have applied to me, and that repeatedly, to beg you, in their names, to open a meeting-room in the *passage*, assuring me that they much wished to have a *réunion* in the *passage*."

But this is not all. The petition of a hundred inhabitants of a neighbourhood is cheering; but the offer that follows from this poor *ouvrier* as to the fitting up of the room at his own cost is even more touching. "I will freely undertake to light and clean the room, as my small contribution; and I am sure that you will have a crowded attendance; and that will correspond with the command, 'Go into the streets and lanes, seek the maimed, and the

halt, and the blind, and invite them to my supper,'—all these are to be found in the *passage*.—Your devoted ——."—(Report for 1875, p. 19.)

The willingness of the proprietors to allow the Mission the use of their premises is a further indication of the extent to which the work has penetrated. The brother of the landlord of the room at Gare d'Ivry, who has a large number of workmen under him, on hearing that the object of the Mission was simply to tell the poor people about Christ, said to his agent,—"We must bear part in this good work; let the gentlemen have the place on their own terms." An old tradesman of Belleville, after a meeting in that faubourg, was heard to say,—"If there were more of these *réunions* we should have no more need of policemen in Paris."

The policemen frequently are found acting not as mere guardians of order, but as helpers in the work of invitation. "Go in, go in," they have been heard saying to the people, you will hear good things. And when the room was over-crowded, they have allowed the people to gather round the open door, on condition of their listening quietly. "It would be well," said one of them, "if there were 200 such rooms in Paris."

A gentleman, once an officer in the French army, visited Mr. M'All. He and his wife attend one of

the stations. About a year before he had been passing the mission-hall on the evening of its opening, and curiosity drew them in. He had no religion,—had never read a page of the Bible; there was no Bible in his house. The words they heard that night awakened new thoughts in both. They obtained a Bible, and began to read it with deep interest. They were visited by some friends connected with the Mission, who helped to teach and guide them. Ere long they found their way to the resting-place, and the peace of the cross filled their souls. They would not hide the treasure they had found. "I want," said the officer, "to stand up in that room and tell the people of the blessings I have obtained there. When one has been cured of a fierce disease, he wants to recommend the remedy which cured him to the others who are sick. I long to see all Paris covered with these *réunions;* and I believe that it will be so."

"I am not quite two years old," said a lady after a New-Year's afternoon prayer meeting. She was the head of a business-house, and had, within the last two years, found eternal life at one of the meetings. She and her household had been in deep religious ignorance till then. "How changed," she said, "is everything in our household since last

New-Year's Day. Great is our thankfulness. You are truly my brother in the Lord Jesus Christ."

"Father, good-bye," said a little child at Les Ternes, only seven and a-half years old. He was going out to his work as his dying daughter was thus bidding him farewell.

"Good-bye, I shall not see you again. I am going," said the child.

"Where?"

"To heaven. I see Jesus; He is come to fetch me."

After a little, and just as she was dying, she said to her mother, "I see Jesus; He has come for me." She had learned from Miss Blundell at the mission-room all she knew about Jesus.

"A year ago," said an *ouvrier*, "we knew nothing of the love of Jesus." He came with his wife to express their gratitude for what they had learned. Several others of the same class bore similar testimony. With some the insight into Divine truth is a rapid process, considering the total ignorance of Scripture in which they have been brought up. With others it is slow.

"At length," said a clever *ouvrier* to Mr. M'All, "I begin to comprehend a little,—a little." Yet he had been attending the meetings for three years. These people need the instruction of the *conscience*

as well as that of the *mind*. They do not know what *sin* is; and how difficult it must be to see their need of a Sinbearer, or comprehend His work. Sins against the Church, against the priest, or against the public laws of the realm they know; but sins against God;—they know not what they are. The teachers must begin at the first elements with them, and exercise much patience as well as charity. They are just beginning to spell out the truth that a sinner needs a Saviour; that a great sinner needs a great Saviour; and that the Lord Jesus Christ is just such a Saviour as they need. "Mr. —— told me that I am lost," said a poor woman. "Is it so? Am I really lost?" She had to be told what "lost" meant, and that the Son of Man came to seek and save the lost.

The "birthday letter" came all right. It was promised, as the reader will remember (p. 111), by an *ouvrier* and his wife, who intimated their intention of bringing a "lovely bouquet" on what they called their "birthday." A real bouquet came, as the expression of affection and thankfulness; and with it a letter, which greatly enhanced the gift. Twelve months before (the letter stated), they had entered the room at La Chapelle, dark and thoughtless, and left it under a deep sense of sin, which had soon ripened into faith in Christ. In this

birthday letter the writer exhorts his neighbours to break with the world, and to accept Christ. May I not give his message to all, in the words of the German poet,—

> "Come and He will give you rest,
> Sorrow-stricken, sin-defiled;
> He can make the sinfullest
> God the Father's blessed child.
> Trust Him, for His word is plain,
> Christ receiveth sinful men."

"Viens à Jésu,—viens à Jésu," were the last words of a poor aged woman who died during this year (1875). Strange words to come from a poor lodging in the very heart of infidel Montmartre! She had been wholly ignorant of the Gospel, till a Christian *ouvrier* taught her the things of Christ. This workman and a neighbour opened some small meetings in their house. These small,—"cottage meetings" shall I call them?—had been absorbed in the larger gatherings of the mission-room, and at these gatherings she had faithfully attended. At last the good *ouvrier* missed her from her place in the meeting, and sought her out in her poor dwelling. He found her very feeble; but she received him with joy, telling him that she had no fear of death, for she had found a Saviour who had conquered for her the last enemy. After several visits, he found her at length sinking. She tried to utter

some words. Bending over her, he caught the words of the well-known hymn,

"Une bonne nouvelle
Descend des cieux."

And then she whispered the last line of the verse,—"Viens à Jésu."

It was at this station that an *ouvrier* had the courage to stand up before 400 persons assembled at the anniversary tea meeting and tell of the change wrought on himself and his aged mother. Montmartre mission-hall, he said, was his spiritual birthplace. At a similar anniversary in the La Villette station, three *ouvriers* successively bore testimony before their neighbours to their joy in Christ. Two of them had made known their change to Mr. M'All some time before, and declared their resolution, and that of their wives, to serve the Lord. They have been seeking to be useful to others.

"I shall take my grandchildren with me into the wood, and there we shall hold a little *réunion* among ourselves." So said an aged female who attended the weekly prayer meeting, but was about to leave for the country: and thus the Mission works its way through the land, entering its villages as well as its towns. The distribution of millions of tracts among the French peasantry towards the close of the late Exhibition, though not directly the doing of the

Mission, yet was part of the working of its machinery in connection with other societies, and must be viewed as one of the marvellous ways in which the Gospel has of late years been sent through all France: cities, towns, and villages.

"He that believeth is not condemned" is the apostolic gospel; and it is the burden of the messages in these mission-halls. This simplicity of the way of life strikes these poor *ouvriers*, because of the numerous and complex ceremonies which they have been taught in the Romish Church to consider necessary to salvation, and because they never heard before of any religious ordinance that had not to be paid for, even by the poorest. A FREE pardon! This is something new. Nothing to pay, but all paid for already! Is it true? No money needed for salvation, and no priest for absolution! Can it be possible? "Only believe," these men say; and they read it out of the Book of God. This is certainly a new religion. So thought some of the hearers at the first meeting in the Rue de Turbigo, who went home wondering at the news. "Salvation on simply believing," they said; "is it really so? This brings the Saviour close to every man, and every man close to the Saviour."

"There, my boy, read that book; it will make an honest man of thee," said an *ouvrier* to his son. He

was a boy of Montmartre, and had come wishing to borrow a Bible. The copy offered was in small type; and the father, observing this, came forward to ask one of a larger type, as "all in the house," he said, "wished to read it." As the boy carried off the volume under his arm, the father spoke the above words to him, shrewdly indicating his opinion of the Book, as teaching not only religion, but the moralities of life.*

A visitor went into the house of an *ouvrier* who had newly come to the station. The room was wretched and unfurnished; the man was a drunkard. But lately, said the wife, since he attended the meeting, he has been giving up his intemperance. After some time the visitor returned, and found the whole dwelling changed. All was neatness and comfort. The wife pointed to a new wardrobe they had got, and said, "What do you think we call it? —Mr. M'All's wardrobe; for we never could have had money to buy it, had it not been for these meetings."

A young pastor writes to Mr. M'All regarding a workman who had come to him for counsel. Some

* The following is a singular testimony from an intelligent *ouvrier* which is well worth noting:—"Many people very much misunderstand us [*ouvriers*]. We are not against religion. In our political meetings we used to speak against oppression in all its forms; but never, never one word against Jesus Christ."

months previously he had been led to attend one of the meetings in the Ménilmontant room. His conscience was touched, and he became a constant attender. In great darkness of spirit, he had with tears asked prayer to be made for him. After a protracted conflict, he found the gospel peace, and, with his wife, joined an evangelical church. All his spare time is now devoted to Christian work.

In general, the converts have joined the most convenient Protestant Church. And this is the answer to the question which has been often asked,—What do the converts do for fellowship and ordinances? Are they forming a separate Church? No. They are just quietly falling into the churches already existing; and this may be most beneficial to these churches and their pastors, infusing new life by means of the fresh glow of their first love and earnest faith. Dr. Fisch mentions some of the Rue de Turbigo hearers as having joined his congregation, giving evidence of a true spiritual change.

"We are the youngest of six brothers," said an engaging and well-dressed boy of twelve, who came to the Turbigo station leading a younger brother by the hand. He wished to buy a Bible, but had not money enough. The small extra sum was given by friends of the station, and the Bible was obtained. The next Sabbath he came, after the meeting, with

Bible in hand, to express his thanks, and, after telling of the six brothers, he added, "I desire that they should all read this book."

As the messages of life, printed and spoken, have gone into all streets and alleys, so have they reached all classes and all trades;—the soldier, the police, the concierge, the chiffonnier, and street sweeper. The various agents and agencies connected with the Mission have done something for all these; but the immensity of the field so prepares one for discouragement that the least success is cheering. Faith works in the dark, yet finds light there.

The omnibus conductors have not been overlooked. Amid the rush of the ever-pouring crowd,—now flowing out, now in,—it is not always easy to get at them. Yet the gift of a tract or book in passing has done its work; and warm thanks have been expressed by these men for the interest thus shown in their welfare. "The evident delight," says the report, "with which these men, and the keepers of bureaux, cab-drivers, &c., receive the *Portions* and numbers of *L'Ami de la Maison*, &c., is most striking. Sometimes all the men in an omnibus bureau have rushed out on seeing us, inquiring whether we had a new number of the magazine for them. Several have framed the pictures; and those who live

in the districts which we visit once a-month watch for the time of our return."

During the year 1875 several new stations were added and some old ones enlarged; so that the number of sittings increased from 1610 to 2774; and the attendance rose in a still larger proportion, showing that something higher than curiosity was at work, and that novelty was not the attraction. Deeper seriousness pervading the different meetings was even more cheering than the increase of numbers.

This year there came a fraternal letter of pastors and elders, of the most gratifying kind, showing the interest which the work is exciting among the French Protestant churches.*

* I give this interesting letter in a note. It is addressed to Mr. M'All, and is dated, "Paris, 29th April, 1875":—

"Dear Sir and Honoured Brother,—We, the undersigned, Pastors and Elders assembled in conference in Paris on occasion of the Anniversaries of the Protestant Religious Societies, desire to take this opportunity of publicly expressing to you our gratitude and our fraternal sympathy for the work of evangelisation which you have undertaken with so much courage and pursued with so much devotion and perseverance in a constantly increasing number of districts of Paris.

"Many of us know your work from having personally taken part in it, and we are happy to have been able to give you our cordial co-operation. We all associate ourselves with you in prayer; we rejoice to bear testimony to the spirit of fidelity and of charity in which the work is conducted; and we bless God for the visible success and for the great encouragements which He has granted to you.

M. Rosseeuw St. Hilaire thus writes concerning the progress of the work :—

"Thanks to the Divine Head of the Church, the spiritual siege of our great heathen city continues, and advances from day to day. To the fourteen detached forts planted around it, the Rev. Mr. M'All is on the point of adding three others. Our suburbs, with the hard-working *ouvriers* who inhabit them, are already under assault, and awaiting the attack on the centre of the town, commenced by the station of the Rue Turbigo.

"Our dear English friends will be surprised, perhaps, to be informed in the same Report, of the pecuniary exigencies of the work, of the insufficiency of its resources in workers and in money, and, at the same time, of the necessity for extending it. But any one who had attended our meetings would be at no loss to explain this contrast. Those who have not witnessed the earnest attention of those present, above all that of the men, who drink in your words rather than merely listen to them, cannot fully understand how difficult it is for us to stand still, and withhold further aggression, when the Lord

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"Pray accept, Dear Sir and Honoured Brother, the expression of our respectful and fraternal sentiments.

"Signed :—Eug. Bersier, Geo. Fisch, F. Lichtenberger, E. Robin, Rosseeuw St. Hilaire, Ernest Dhombres, Th. Monod, N. Recolin, Samuel Bost, J. J. Keller, Aug. Fisch, J. Bonhoure, V. Lepoids, Ate. Saillens, J. Vignal, J. Gaubert, P. Rouffet, Vincent, Aimé Cadet, L. Boileau, Vernier, A. Pilatte, A. Bastide, A. Malan, Cologny, E. Voreaux, F. Lemaire, F. A. Vincent, H. Andrieu."

Note by Mons. Bersier.—"More than twenty pastors belonging to the National Reformed Church and the Lutheran Church, whose signatures do not appear to this letter, have charged me to state that they adhere to it with all their heart. The address could not be completed while they were on the spot."

Himself, in multiplying the successes as we advance, seems to say, 'Go forward!'

"At last, the laymen are moved; the volunteers so much needed are beginning to join themselves to our ranks. They have, at length, come to understand that the pastors of Paris are fully taxed by the duties of their churches, that there is need to come to their aid, and that, beyond the ecclesiastical confines, there are works awaiting Christians, who are all 'priests and kings.' A number of young men, members of the Young Men's Christian Associations, and students of the Missionary and Theological Institutes, take an increasingly active part in our work, while some brethren more advanced in age lend to it the weight of their experience, and strive to lead perishing souls to Jesus Christ.

"We could not over-estimate the sphere and importance of this work. Excellent as it is, it is but of a preparatory nature. To carry it out to its highest results, there is need of the fully organised churches, side by side with our mission-rooms, to gather into fellowship those whom we are enabled to attract towards it. All that, by God's help, we can do is to lead them to love the Gospel; it is for the pastors to instruct them. It is our part to enlist the recruits; theirs to discipline them. It is ours to sow; it is for them to gather in the harvest. And far from being envious of their part in the undertaking, we feel happy in making it ready for them. The faithful pastors of the city are fully alive to this, and evidence great pleasure in rendering their aid in our meetings when other unavoidable occupations permit. This co-working between the pastors and our evangelistic meetings is the only method by which to arrive at lasting and large results. There is need of scouts to smooth the rugged ground and prepare the way for the regular troops; and that is the humble task which we endeavour to fulfil. But, in order to keep hold of these newly-awakened minds, and to nourish them with the bread of life, churches instinct with spiritual life are needed;

for it is vain to go to draw water except where a spring exists!

"As a Frenchman, I rejoice once more to thank our English brethren for all that they have done for France during and since the war. First of all, they occupied themselves with our physical needs; and God only knows what resources they expended in alleviating so much suffering, and repairing such vast ruins. But this was not enough; after the bodies, they have thought on the souls of their neighbours; and this work is in itself a living evidence of the tender sympathies of the Christians of England for our poor country, which owes to them so much already, and which would yet owe to them far more if, by them, it should be eventually brought to the knowledge of its Saviour."

Five adult Bible classes are reported. The Sunday schools and children's meetings are extending themselves; and in Mr. Maitland Heriot, Mr. M'All finds a most valuable worker among the young. Classes for teaching English go on and a series of useful lectures is begun. An *ouvroir* for poor women has been commenced at Les Ternes, and some of the mission-rooms elsewhere have been made use of for a similar purpose.

The Hymnal of the Mission has been doubled; and the people are greatly interested in the meetings for the practice of psalmody. Each part of the spiritual machinery is coming into fuller operation, and is telling upon the people.

Several prayer meetings are reported this year;—a weekly one at Ornano and Grenelle, and a daily

forenoon one in Belleville for the little band of workers resident there. Praying and working go hand in hand. There is a danger of work superseding prayer: of the hours being so filled up with external activities that retirement and solitude can hardly be obtained. Work in that case becomes either bustle or mechanical routine. The soul gets empty; the workman loses spiritual health and vigour; the mind gets fretted, and the body worn-out; distance from God comes in; life becomes unreal; and bondage succeeds to the liberty of happy service. The late hours and the distances are hindrances to both morning and evening fellowship with God. These hours, of course, cannot be altered, and the over-wrought worker requires a tranquil forenoon to make up for all this. Excessive work, in visitings and meetings, is apt unconsciously to dry up the spirit; and when the labourer is obliged to toil on in this dried-up state, and to speak for God, when jaded and wearied, an amount of spiritual unreality is superinduced which is exceeding dangerous, and of which we must, if we would not do imperfect work, be stripped,—it may be by lessening the labour, it may be by retirement from the field for a season, or it may be by Divine discipline.

Yet there is a certain way of dealing with this

state of things, which we deprecate as unscriptural. "Out of communion," and "in communion" are the set phrases made use of by some in speaking of work for God. Now, "communion" in Scripture means "partnership" (*κοινωνία*), not intercourse of mind with mind, or heart with heart. A believing man, therefore, can never be "out of communion," unless he is broken off from Christ. His "partnership" never ceases, however low his frames may be. I knew one who said that he had given up working, for he was "out of communion." I suppose he meant "the enjoyment of communion," for he could not mean that his "partnership" with the Son of God was destroyed, because his feelings had become dull. Yet he "condemned trusting in frames and feelings," while he was doing the very thing under a high-sounding name. His joy had got low, and he called that being "out of communion," and he would not work till he had got "into communion." But neither should he have prayed, nor praised; nay, neither should he have eaten his food, "for whether we eat or drink or whatever we do, we are to do all to the glory of God," and we cannot do aught to the glory of God when "out of communion" in the scriptural sense. No lowness of spiritual feeling can make void our Divine "partnership," which depends on what we believe, not what

we feel; and it is the knowledge of this great truth, that as believing men we are always "in partnership," how poor soever may be our joy, that lifts us from the dust into liberty and gladness.

It is to be hoped that such peculiar expressions, which some in our own land have much on their lips, will not find their way either to the workers or the converts of Paris. It is by these that Satan introduces division and false teaching. The "catchword" of a sect often contains more than meets the ear; and when that catchword is taken up and pressed, it is sure to lead astray. The frequent use of it is often the indication of spiritual pride, and assumption of superior teaching, as well as of higher attainments; and the stress laid upon it by the speaker is meant to say, "I have got something which you have not; you had better reconsider your standing and associate with me." The work in Paris has been as yet undisturbed by these "diverse and strange doctrines;" and the noble spectacle is presented of a large band of workers from all the different evangelical churches of Great Britain, co-operating with one mind and one heart; not seeking to teach new doctrines, nor to erect sectarian congregations, or to abuse "systems," nor to attack churches, but to gather in the wanderers into the one body of Christ.

Perish the human Shibboleth that splits up the one household of faith, or introduces discord and suspicion into the communion of saints. Even true doctrines are not always to be used for *division;* and there are not a few truths which Christians may differ about calmly and honestly, but which if made the foundations of separate sects, or magnified into necessary grounds of disunion, become snares and stumbling-blocks to the morbid, or the weak, or the fickle. Calvin declared, in his own fervent way, his willingness to cross ten seas in order to *unite* the Churches of God, in his day. There are some, we fear, who would not shrink from compassing both sea and land to *divide* it, in ours. In most religious awakenings there have been found men who, taking advantage of the warm state of feeling among the converts, have tried to raise a sect of which they might be the head. Hitherto Paris has been spared this humbling spectacle; and Popery has not been able there to boast of her own unity, and point the contemptuous finger to a divided Protestantism. They who "creep into houses" and "beguile unstable souls" have, as yet, been restrained from exercising their ignoble vocation in France. It is no small matter of thankfulness that the Parisian Mission should have been spared this evil; thus far permitted to work in peace, and to abide in happy unity.

To intrude upon "other men's labours," when the whole world lies before us, is more like "the thief and the robber" than the shepherd; to "boast in another man's line of things made ready to our hand" is not the part of a true-hearted Christian man. To "cause divisions" (except in Satan's kingdom) was not the apostolic vocation, nor in accordance with the taste of the primitive Church.

The single-mindedness of the Reformers in their noble labours, concerning this thing, is very noticeable. To draw men to themselves, or to found a sect was altogether too low a thing to mind, or to think of. Whether (according to Beza's epigram) we hear Calvin *docte docentem*, or Viret *mella fundentem*, or Farel *fortiter tonantem*, we feel that we are listening to preachers whose grand thought was how to draw men to the cross.

Not that we count upon smooth progress, or think that the great breaker up of peace and truth and unity will overlook Paris. Offences will come; and we must be prepared for them.

The history of the last days is to be a tale of shipwreck; of which we have the prophetic warning in the seven apocalyptic epistles, which contain the sad story of seven shipwrecks,—the foreshadows of something still more sad. But that is no argument against cheerful, hopeful labour. The evil day will

come soon enough; meanwhile let us, with songs upon our lips, go forward to do the work committed to our hands.

Nor let us forget that our labour does not end with the ingathering. The tending, the watching, the feeding of the flock are matters of earnest care. The sheep wanders away on its own feet, yet it does not return on them, but on the Shepherd's shoulder. It cannot be trusted otherwise. It takes the Shepherd's strength to carry it back, and when thus brought back, to keep it within the fold. This is one of the most solemn lessons that an under-shepherd can learn. It is a lesson which the Parisian labourers will find more and more pressed upon them as the work widens and prospers.

CHAPTER VII.

PROGRESSIVE INGATHERING.

I COMPRESS the events of the next two years into one chapter; not wishing unduly to extend this narrative, and referring my readers to the reports for 1876 and 1877, which, being more recent, are more accessible than those of earlier years, which are now out of print.

The localities are so far the same, save that fresh ground is broken, and new stations added; while some of the old halls not only retain their audiences, but increase them, so that enlargement is required. And this expansion of the old rooms is one of the most palpable signs of the vigour and permanence of the work. It shows how the district is affected and penetrated. Not curiosity, but healthy interest sustains the work. One man carries the message to another;—the children to the father, and the father to the children, the brother to the sister, and the sister to the brother. The

music of the hymns floats everywhere, and refuses to be shut out. The "good news" come and go, day by day: or rather night by night. There is no flagging, no falling off; but increase of interest and honest anxiety. In some cases it may be wonder; but the wonder seems to work, and spread; not evaporating, but passing into something more substantial than amazement.

Thus the halls swell out, calling for frequent enlargement;—and propagating themselves, if one may use the phrase; so that demands for new stations come from many quarters of the city.

The circulation of Bibles and books continues unabated; the priests complaining that they cannot find a chair in their district to sit down upon for some heretic tract, or Protestant Bible, or evangelical hymn-book.

The spiritual work also deepens. The truth is sinking down into men's souls: and though, as Romanists, accustomed to trifle with sin, except as against the Virgin or the Church, they are slow to apprehend the awful truth of human guilt before God, many are beginning to understand in their *consciences* that there is such a thing as the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and that only the blood of the one, unrepeated sacrifice can pacify the conscience, or exhaust the penalty, or cleanse the sinner.

House-to-house visitations are vigorously carried on. In addition to the lady visitors, a Bible-woman is employed; and nearly all the mission-workers take part in seeking out the poor people at their homes, and in endeavouring to lead them not only to the district meeting, but to Christ Himself.

As to *ouvroirs* and soup-kitchens, the report gives the following interesting statement :—

"At the beginning of this winter, one of our lady-workers remarked, 'We need something intermediate,—a link between the public *réunions* and the domiciliary visits.' In fact, questions and difficulties often suggest themselves to the hearers respecting which they have not courage to address themselves to the speakers, but which hinder the development of the Divine work in their heart. The *ouvroir* is well fitted to supply this lack. At La Villette, for example, at a fixed hour each Saturday afternoon, the women and girls are invited to bring their work, of whatever kind (repairing garments, &c. &c.), and they are helped by a skilful seamstress to make the best of their poor materials, even to turn an old dress into a new one, &c. All this produces a sentiment of gratitude which prepares the way for each one to make known her thoughts and anxieties. This leads on to a familiar conversation on the truths of the Gospel, &c. Our two soup-kitchens reach the poorest of the poor. Often, to our certain knowledge, the basin of soup and piece of bread thus received constitute their entire nourishment for the day. While they are assembled, we read the Bible, and speak to them words of love and encouragement. At La Villette, we meet with some *chiffonniers* (rag-gatherers) and street sweepers, who, working day and night, Sundays included, are in the deepest ignorance. The Bible is, to them, an entirely new book, and their attention

is as eager as their ignorance is extreme. One of these women, a *chiffonnière*, to whom we put the question, 'Who are they that go to heaven?' replied in her simplicity, 'The French.' At Belleville, a poor woman was complaining, 'It is all in vain; I have prayed again and again, but God does not hear me.' Another, as poor as she, turned to her saying, 'Oh, do not speak so: my circumstances are as trying as yours, but God has comforted me, and given me a great blessing.' The latter is a solitary widow, having lost her children. During the last two months, we have served from 1700 to 1800 rations at the soup-kitchens. Within the same period, our Bible-woman has made upwards of 250 visits in these crowded and destitute districts."

The testimony of M. St. Hilaire to all this is very decided. "The people," he writes, "*more attentive than ever, crowd to these meetings,* which have not for them the attraction of novelty or amusement; and in which, instead of flattering the audience, we speak to them many humiliating truths."

Such is the statement in the letter which prefaces the Fifth Annual Report. We give the following paragraphs of that letter entire. They are too important to be omitted:—

"You ask me what new features strike me in these dear meetings whether in respect to the hearers or the speakers. First, then, as to the speakers. What strikes me especially is that their interest in this united work increases from day to day. Last year on seeing your *réunions* constantly advancing in number and in size, I will now frankly say that I was disquieted; I feared that, soon, it would be the speakers and not the hearers who would be lacking. This year, on the

contrary,—not only has their number increased in a proportion which will soon surpass the necessity, but, once enrolled in our little army, pastors and laymen alike are evidently happy in the service of our glorious Captain! The laymen accomplish here their apprenticeship as speakers, in the best of all schools; the pastors leave behind them at our doors as they enter the phraseology of set sermons in order to speak the language of the heart, which alone is understood by the masses of the people. In labouring for the good of others, we find blessing for ourselves. All are happy, I repeat it; and how could we fail to be so, in feeling ourselves carried back to the days of the primitive church; in seeing these men, indifferent or hostile to religion a few years ago, partaking in haste their evening meal on leaving the workshop, and abandoning the wine-shop and politics in order to hear some peaceful Christians make known to them the Saviour.

"To speak to our *ouvriers* of Paris is, truly, a pleasant task; for I do not know any audience more intelligent, more attentive, more sympathetic, not even that of the *Sorbonne* or the *Collège de France*. Even their want of culture ensures their attention;—they do not come in order to criticise or to discuss, but to feel and to be moved. It is to their heart that one has need to speak; and you will always be far better understood when you do so than if you address yourself merely to their intellect.

"Another sign of God's blessing resting upon these *réunions* is that the number of MEN frequenting them is constantly increasing, and this, some years ago, was the failing point in such efforts. Shall I go further? I have perceived, if I mistake not, that the men are better hearers than the women; and this can be understood, because all that they hear is new to them! All their preconceived notions are overthrown, surprise is seen on their countenances: they feel that they are entering as into an unknown world, of which even the language is foreign to them. So that one needs some other

word than *listen* to describe their impassioned attention when we speak to them of the Gospel. Its tender appeals go straightway to their heart ; and then they feel that they are loved. There lies our power over them ; and it is the only power we possess, we, who are but poor worms of the earth, in dealing with these momentous realities, which we could not take upon our lips without trembling, unless we felt that Jesus is with us, and that the Holy Spirit dictates to us what we should speak.

"Some days ago, I was present at the meeting of Faubourg St. Antoine, the one of all your stations which is my favourite, because it is most thoroughly a gathering of the populace. I had begun to speak when I saw five young workmen, genuine *bandits* (forgive the word), walk into the room, who appeared to have come straight from the drinking shop. Although accustomed to the wonderful calmness which reigns in these meetings (you remember that it was not always so at the outset), I confess that I was a little disquieted ; and, as I went on to speak, I kept my eye upon the new-comers. But, when seated, how speedily they became subdued and attracted in the sweet atmosphere of peace and of sympathy ! After some minutes, you would not have recognised them ; the expression of their countenance was quite changed, *le gamin de Paris* had disappeared, and had given place, if not, as yet, to the Christian, at least to the thoughtful and well-disposed listener. The gospel which they heard, doubtless for the first time, had thus come home to them.

"Another feature of progress is in the size of the mission-halls, which increases along with the number of attendants. Most of the insignificant shops which, in the beginning, were sufficient for the purpose, have given place to larger rooms, which are, with equal ease, filled. It is well known that in these large gatherings of human beings there is a sacred contagion which no one can resist, and which is spread around by those who have felt it. Then it is that people feel themselves brought nearer to each other, and more happy, and

they desire to share with others what they have received. Our large rooms will contain—Belleville, 400 ; St. Antoine, 370 ; Ornano, 320 ; and the new hall opened this week in the Rue de Rivoli, 270 persons when filled.

"The Bible classes for adults are also making progress, and the Sunday schools are more and more numerously attended. As to the music, among these people, generally far from musical, it has become quite a passion. At the last meeting I attended, when a singing practice was announced to follow it, no one went out, the whole assembly joined in the hymns, in unison generally, but with considerable correctness, I assure you, and without any harsh discord. I perceived there the close link which exists between music and the religious sentiment, and I became conscious that the hymn could become also a prayer.

"Such, dear friend, are my impressions respecting your work, jotted down in all simplicity. I have tried to cause others to feel what I have myself vividly felt. Would that the Lord might enable me to communicate to your readers the ever-increasing interest which this delightful work awakes in my heart!"

The new-year's gatherings drew out some memorable testimonies as to the results of the past work. An *ouvrier* of Ménilmontant writes thus to Mr. M'All, in his own name and that of his wife ; and nothing can be more satisfactory than the following statement :—"The day on which we entered your meeting for the first time, now two years ago, was for us a day blessed by God ; and from the day in which we accepted for ourselves the glorious Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, we have found

peace of mind; and I am well persuaded that the only real happiness which can be tasted on earth is to be found in accepting the salvation which our divine Lord and Saviour has obtained for us, in shedding for us poor sinners His blood upon the cross. I desire with all my heart that all those who attend those delightful meetings may there find the same joy and blessedness which my wife and I have found there. We thank God every day for having sent you among us to proclaim to us the sacred and divine truth."

Some leagues from Paris, the head of a family died. For the funeral, the neighbouring pastor was sent for to officiate. The family were not of his flock; and finding himself surrounded with strangers, he asked, "Why did you send for me?" He was told that the master of the house, whose funeral he was thus invited to, had been occasionally in Paris on business, and had come upon one of the meetings. Again and again, when business led him back to the city, he returned to the meeting; and the testimony of the relatives was, that from that time he was a changed man. There was no gospel in his neighbourhood, and the tidings had been heard by him at the station, to which he was "accidentally" brought, for the first time.

"These are the things for which we are thirsting,"

said a soldier one day at one of the meetings. "This is what we need, and what we want to learn," said some soldiers on leaving the Rue Turbigo meeting one night; "we never hear anything like this in the *caserne*" (barracks).

The Bible-class meetings are all full of interest, and the written answers to the questions put show the intelligence of the young people. "How does one know that God has forgiven him?" was one of these questions, and the answers on slips of paper were striking testimonies to the operation of divine truth in the writers. Once the entire meeting remained to the Bible class; and at some of these meetings perplexed ones have been disentangled, doubting ones brought into light, and undecided ones made decided, and led to set out on a career of usefulness. The shaking of hands which goes on at such times among these lively French people, both old and young, is pleasant to witness.

Many of the boys are warmly interested in the meetings. "Ground should be bought here," said one of them on seeing the crowded room of La Villette, "on which to build a great *temple*, that the whole neighbourhood may come and hear the blessed words of the Saviour." Another, while eagerly listening to the speaker, was angrily forced away by his father. Next evening, all was changed. The father,

neatly dressed, brought his boy back in the most friendly manner.

"Sir, it was in this room that I found my Saviour," said the father of a family to Mr. M'All at the Grenelle meeting, as he grasped his hand. "I thank you with all my heart," said an *ouvrier* of Montmartre, when leaving Paris, "for these *réunions*. I have attended for a year and a-half, and I am a changed man,—yes, sir, *a changed man.*" His life showed the nature and reality of the change.

The new room at Passy was opened, and, at the meetings there, cheering testimony was borne to the blessing received in the old. In one family the representatives of three generations have come under the power of the Gospel. The utterances of joyful thankfulness by the old grandmother, ninety years of age, were most touching.

The keepers of the omnibus bureaus have very hard work. They have no Sabbath; seven days without a break is their weekly labour. One of them was full of gratitude for copies of the *L'Ami de la Maison*, and mentioned how carefully he had preserved them. He spoke of friendship among Christians. Mr. M'All replied, "True, my friend, we are all brethren." "Yes, sir," said he, "brethren in our Lord Jesus Christ, are we not?"

The La Chapelle station, like most of the others, is

surrounded by the houses of the poor. By the side of it was the dwelling of an aged man of seventy-six, who at this advanced time of life was still obliged to work for his bread. His working hours did not allow him to attend at the beginning of the meeting; but he used to steal in towards the close into a corner and listen. The visitors found him on a death-bed, but resting on the one sacrifice of the Son of God, for pardon and entrance into the kingdom. "Only one Physician," he said, "can help me; but He can do all. No fellow-man can help another to get rid of his sins; God only can." The meeting had not been opened in vain beside the lodging of this stranger. It had been to him the gate of heaven.

"Wife, wife, I have found such a religion as I never thought existed; it is so good, so good; you must come also." A poor man spoke these bright words on returning home from one of the meetings. He had been passing the door, and was invited to enter, which he did. The light shone in upon his darkness; and he brought his wife and two children with him. They all continue in regular attendance.

"Strange that he understands so much *there*, when elsewhere he cannot be taught anything." Such was the expression of astonishment by the relatives of a poor boy of fourteen, whose intellect

had up till that time been almost dormant. He is the son of respectable parents, in comfortable circumstances; and from the first time that he came to the mission-room evinced, as the report says, an all-absorbing interest in what he heard. The Bible class is his favourite meeting: and his intellect has been wakened up, by the news of a Saviour's love, to new capacities, and his heart to new susceptibilities. The Spirit of God has been his Teacher, and he has learned quickly.

On the staircases of houses, not only children but grown-up persons may be found seated pursuing their ordinary occupations, and at the same time singing the Mission hymns. One of the missionary students, superintendent of the Gare d'Ivry Sunday School, when visiting in that poor and neglected district, heard voices thus singing,—

"Sur toi je me repose;"

and,—

"Le message des anges."

Not a few children have intelligently professed their faith in Christ. At Grenelle, Signor Peretto questioned carefully a boy of thirteen, and received, in the presence of friends, most satisfying answers, expressive of his acceptance of the Saviour and His work. At Belleville also a similar case occurred; and, in another station, the children have expressed

a desire to commence a prayer meeting among themselves. A young man at another station had expressed his assurance of acceptance in Christ; and mentioned that he and another youth had begun to read the Bible together and to pray every day. This other youth had also found peace in believing.

"I could give the names," says a devoted visitor, who had during the year 1876 paid 950 visits in the houses of the people, "of forty-two persons who have become earnest seekers, twenty-nine women and thirteen men. I have met this year with seven women and two men who gave evidence of thorough decision for Christ." She speaks, too, of a very general and earnest desire to understand the truth, and mentions four households in which family worship has been established; also two families who meet together every evening to read the Bible. "Saved or lost?" said an *ouvrier*, who used to spend all his Sunday evenings in the wine-shop, but now regularly attends the district meeting; "Saved or lost? I find this question to be a most serious one; it occupies all my thoughts, and I want to come to a decision."

"*Le salut gratuit*" is a wonder to many; and M. Naef, among several instances of awakening that had come under his notice, mentions one whose eyes had been opened to see this *gratuitous salvation,*

which to all men, but especially to Romanists,—who have been accustomed to pay for everything in religion, and to look on the priest as a huckster bargaining for a good price in the market,—is a thing hard to be believed, or even understood. On comprehending the freeness of this free salvation for the first time, he had given vent to some strong expressions of his new-found joy and wonder.

FREELY SAVED! It is this that everywhere calls forth the feelings and utterances of astonishment in those whose eyes have rested on the cross of the Substitute. "And have I nothing to *do?*" said a dying man once to us, as we preached to him Jesus and His sufficiency. "Nothing, absolutely and entirely nothing, in order to be saved," was our reply. "All is done: it is the doing of another that saves." His eye brightened, and he passed away in peace, with *nunc dimittis* in his heart, if not on his lips. Some very bright instances of this we find in the story of Robert Haldane's wonderful work at Montauban, more than sixty years ago.

"*Je suis un grand pécheur mais j'ai un grand Répondant.*" These were the death-bed words of M. Encontre, Principal of the Montauban College, to Mr. Haldane, on bidding farewell. This distinguished mathematician and philosopher had been a strong Arminian in theology; but was led to the knowledge

of the One Righteousness through faith, by Mr. Haldane. Speculation, philosophy, dogmatism, self-righteousness stood between him and the cross. But they had all given way. As a sinner he looked at last to the Sinbearer, and found rest.

"*C'est trop grand pour etre vrai!*" was the vehement exclamation of the French pastor, when, in an evening walk on the banks of the Tarn, Mr. Haldane pressed upon him the words on the cross, "It is finished!" He had been strongly opposed to the idea of salvation by another's doings; and, when the light burst in upon him, he could not contain himself for gladness. The tidings of his new-found joy were conveyed to his aged father, above eighty; and the same joy took possession of him, so that the whole household were affected as they saw the old man going about the house clasping his hands and joyfully exclaiming, "*Tout est accompli!*"*

But my narrative must return to Paris; and the *little* incidents recorded in the reports give a faithful description of the work itself, without ornament or eloquence.

"Je suis scellé pour la gloire,
J'avance vers mon pays;
Ecoutez tous mon histoire
Et l'amour de Jésus Christ

* Memoirs of R. and J. A. Haldane, pp. 467-8.

Jésus mon ami suprème
Sur moi veille ; il l'a promis ;
J'aime Jésu, Jésu m'aime
Comme un berger sa brebis."

At a poor bedside in Les Ternes these words were repeated by a visitor to a dying girl of fifteen. "Yes, yes," was her brief but earnest response. Just before she died she tried to sing,—

"Avançons-nous joyeux, toujours joyeux,
Vers le pays des esprits bienheureux
Vers la demeure où Jésus pour nous prie :
Marchons joyeux, c'est là notre patrie."

As we glance over the report for 1876, we are interested in the *headings* of the paragraphs, as showing the nature of the expansion which is taking place. They are such as the following :—"utility of large rooms ;" "new central station ;" "new stations and enlargements ;" "financial position ;" "workers ;" "occasional helpers;" "adult Bible classes;" "prayer meetings ;" "miscellaneous meetings ;" "domiciliary visitation ;" "lending libraries ;" "Bibles, tracts, magazines ;" "hymns and hymn-books." By this time the number of stations had risen to 19, and the sittings to 3700. The average weekly attendance at adult meetings was 5500; and at Sunday schools and services for the young, 2000. I add one extract :—

"Each advance which we have been enabled to make in

accommodation has been followed by a fully corresponding increase in the number of hearers. Thus our present fine room in Belleville, opened in October, 1875, instead of the former small and inconvenient one, has twice required subsequent enlargement in order to receive the crowded Sunday evening congregations. We obtained in the spring a large '*Café Concert*' in the Faubourg St. Antoine, and converted it into a mission-room to replace the former one, little more than one-third the size. This spacious place is quite insufficient to contain the numbers who flock to it. On the Sunday evening, it is usual for many to have to remain standing to the close. In the cases of at least two others of our older stations there can be no doubt that, if we were warranted in incurring the increased rental, rooms two or three times the size would be immediately filled with eager listeners.

"At our station of Boulevard Ornano, Montmartre, which has been constantly advancing in attendance and interest during the four and a-half years of its existence, we have the prospect of speedily adding two hundred sittings. Our generous friend, Captain Knox, R.N., is prepared to help us to meet the cost, in memory of his late wife, whose heart was greatly set upon evangelisation in France, and with whose name our remote station of the Gare d'Ivry (evidently made a blessing amidst its dark and neglected district) is associated; she having provided the means for its foundation and support.

"Though much blessing has rested upon our room in the Rue Turbigo, we have long felt the desirableness of securing a larger place of meeting in the neighbourhood between the '*Halles Centrales*' and '*Hôtel de Ville*,' where a daily evangelistic meeting might be held, similar to that sustained by Pastor Armand-Delille in the Rue Royale. Mr. Martin Sutton, jun., of Reading, and some other friends, having most kindly offered to contribute a part of the rental, we were encouraged to seek out and hire a suitable locality. It is a very neat room, containing 270 sittings, well placed on the great Rue de Rivoli,

near the well-known Tour St. Jacques. Here it is our purpose, every evening and on the Sunday afternoon, to invite the passers-by to hear the Gospel-message. We earnestly ask the prayers of many that this new and arduous enterprise may be abundantly blessed. In order to meet the unavoidably heavy rental, we shall have need of generous contributions. This new station was opened December 28th. Most suitable addresses were delivered on the occasion by the pastors Armand-Delille, Recolin, and Fisch, and by the Rev. E. W. Hitchcock, as the representative of our American friends. We are much encouraged by the deep attention of the hearers, many of whom, doubtless, listen for the first time to the Gospel. The co-operation of M. Théodore Monod is invaluable in launching this momentous enterprise.

"In order not to leave the immediate vicinity of our former room, Rue Turbigo, unprovided for, we have arranged to hold two evangelistic meetings weekly in the chapel of our valued friend, Dr. Fisch, Rue Charlot."

The testimony of the Rev. Horace Noel, in a letter of date, "Paris, September 12, 1876," to Mr. M'All, is well worth recording here :—all the more because of its reference to the "storms of atheistic opposition" which the Mission had to encounter at some of the stations in its earlier days :—

"Having had this year, for the fifth time, the privilege of helping to carry on your Mission during your absence, I gladly give my testimony to the wonderful success with which it has pleased God to crown your labours. No one, I think, who has taken part in the work can doubt that the hand of the Lord has been evidently displayed in it.

"I first attended your meetings in October, 1872, when it was scarcely nine months since they began, and when you had

but four stations opened: namely, Belleville, Ménilmontant, Boulevard Ornano, and Charonne. Of these, that of Boulevard Ornano was by far the largest and most promising, although the storms of atheistic opposition which attended its early days had not, I believe, long subsided.

"But I suppose that the united attendance at all these four rooms hardly averaged more than may now be seen in the one room at the Faubourg St. Antoine.

"Since then I have seen the number of your stations gradually increased from four to eighteen, small congregations changed into large ones, and audiences that were more or less unsettled and disorderly becoming almost entirely composed of serious and attentive hearers. Your success in enlisting workers of both nations and of various Churches, and bringing them into harmonious and brotherly co-operation, has also been very noteworthy.

"But what most of all assures me that God's blessing has rested on your work is the examples which I have seen of those who, by means of it, have been brought to the knowledge of the Saviour; and who are now showing forth His praise, not only with their lips, but in their lives. Patience and energy, and wise arrangements, might suffice to assemble large and attentive audiences, but every soul rescued out of Satan's power and brought to the feet of Christ is a result which no human toil or human skill, apart from God's own working, could have effected."

It is in this year (1876) that we have the first report of the work among the children under the superintendence of Mr. A. A. Maitland Heriot. This juvenile field is of course very large, and hitherto utterly neglected. The Church of Rome is the Church of money, and concerns herself chiefly with

those who can pay. As a rule, children "don't pay." They are not a lucrative concern to the priest, except at baptism and confirmation and communion. Besides, the children of Paris are, like their parents, considerably disconnected from the priesthood. The priest is not now the master of the family. The young people have gathered into the mission-halls in great numbers, both as parts of the general audience and in meetings for themselves. Mr. Heriot's work has been a very earnest and successful one, and his reports will be read with deep interest. He has had a considerable staff of fellow-labourers; and the assistance he has had from some zealous self-denying ladies has been very valuable. Gladly should I have given this first report in full, but space hinders, and I must content myself with the following extracts:—

"We seek also to become acquainted with our little hearers personally, hoping that their love for us may lead to a love for their great unknown Friend. Many visits have been paid with this object in view, especially to any we heard were ill or in hospital. Another important addition to our work has been the formation of several young people's Bible classes. These classes, conducted in such a way as to make all comers feel at home, are likely to do much good. They are destined for the older and more thoughtful children. These poor, ignorant ones have seldom the most elementary knowledge of evangelical truth. Such terms as 'conversion,' or 'washed in the blood of Christ,' have no meaning for them, and at first often cause amusement. Five such Bible classes have been

begun, and we hope soon to see more of them in operation. A Christian lady, gifted for this work in a more than ordinary degree, has been, in the providence of God, and in answer to many prayers, sent to undertake it. We have also to thank Miss Emma Leigh (whose sister's work among English girls in Paris is so widely known and so widely beneficial) for her valuable help in this way, and hope that it may be long continued.

"A gigantic and almost virgin field of labour is open to us in the young men of this city. The name of their temptations is Legion, for they are many. If there is one city in the world more than another which is the sink and sepulchre of young men, that city is Paris. We have not, alas! so far been able to start more than two young men's meetings, but arrangements are now pending with a man suitable for this work, at present serjeant-major in a well-known cavalry regiment, but willing to renounce his position, and his prospects of earthly glory, to carry on the conquests of the Eternal kingdom. We hope that ere long his arrival here will open the way for more energetic measures among both young men and children.

"Two young women's meetings have also been commenced in localities which, by their vicinity to factories, invited such a step. Miss Bonnycastle has devoted a portion of her time to one of these, which is preceded by an English class; and Miss Matheson, to whose welcome arrival we have already alluded, ably conducts the other. Christian ladies could not wish for a wider or more pressing mission than that presented by these young girls, especially in those quarters of Paris where absolutely nothing is being done for them. The young women stand in as great need of the Gospel as the young men. Those of the *ouvrière* class work for the most part in factories, where there is much that is evil. In the evening, numerous balls are open, where there is plenty of light and glitter and society —there, no doubt, a very pleasant, but a very deadly, evening

may be passed. Without the ties of home, as we know them, and surrounded by gay companions all day long, what can be expected of a poor Parisian girl, who knows not the Saviour?"

"It has been interesting to watch the transformations that have occurred in the behaviour of different children; the irregular often becoming more regular in their attendance—restless and talkative ones beginning to listen, and a good many becoming seriously attentive. A few days ago, at Bercy, a little girl of ten or eleven took my hand, and when I stooped down to hear what she had to say, she made this brief communication,—'Monsieur, j'ai donné mon cœur à Jésus.'

"The band of Christian friends who devote themselves entirely to this mission, at present numbers four. An increase of the staff of workers being necessary for an extension of the work, this number will (D.V.) soon be augmented. We shall continually endeavour to obtain the assistance of such as are not only excellent as regards Christian consistency, but who are also, by adaptation for our particular kind of work, and by earnest prayerfulness, likely to be successful soul-winners. 'They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever.' Let us endeavour to turn to righteousness many of the boys and girls who are already in the vortex of the great whirlpool of vice and wickedness, which sucks so many down to perdition. Oh for a word of power to reach their hearts, and a steady hand to point them to the cross!

"One very pleasant feature, perhaps I should say result, of our work, is the evident love and gratitude of the children towards us. These sentiments are sometimes too vociferously expressed by rounds of applause upon our entering an assembly of young urchins; sometimes by childish letters of thanks. Here is one from a little girl, who wrote what she felt too shy to say. I do not venture to spoil it by translation:—

"'Monsieur, Je vous prie de m'excuser si je me permets de vous écrire ces quelques lignes, ne sachant pas mieux faire.

Vous me demandez souvent si je suis sauvée. Oui, je suis sauvée. J'aime notre Seigneur Jésus-Christ, et j'en suis aimée. Je suis toujours avec lui, et il veille toujours sur moi ; sans Dieu je ne serais jamais heureuse. Monsieur, je vous remercie des bons conseils que vous m'avez donnée bien souvent. Je vous présente mes respects les plus reconnaissants.—JULIETTE P.'"

The year 1877 does not slacken in its work, nor diminish in the interest of its details. The stations are now twenty-two; the meetings full, and all bearing fruit. Of the workers, some have left, and some have returned. The Rev. G. T. Dodds, from Edinburgh, with his wife, join the Mission as permanent workers. But the field is still too large for the number and the strength of the labourers. The call for labourers is urgent; and still more the call for prayer in behalf of those already in the field. The Lord of the harvest waits to be interceded with. There are no doubt, in the case of France, the unanswered prayers of past generations still in store; and God is not unrighteous to forget the cry of the martyrs of other days; but He is waiting for new cries, and is easy to be entreated.

M. St. Hilaire, dating from "Paris, December 16, 1877," thus writes his impressions of the year; and as he has, with unwearied zeal, thrown himself into the work, his successive testimonies are very valuable. He writes as a scholar and a Christian; as one who knows Paris and its population well:—

"When you ventured to establish a daily meeting in the centre of Paris, in a quarter entirely devoted to business, I was, I acknowledge, surprised, almost alarmed, at your boldness. Among your twenty-two stations, this was the only one opened daily, and I could scarcely believe that it would ever become filled.

"How, then, shall I describe my astonishment and my joy when, entering this mission-hall, doubled in size, and which now can accommodate nearly 300 persons, I saw it filled, all the chairs occupied, and some hearers standing. In meetings of this kind the women usually form the majority. But there, amidst that business quarter, where life is so laborious and moments are so precious, at least four-fifths of the attendants were men, and among them, marvellous to say, the majority were young men. A certain neatness and superiority of appearance indicated a class somewhat above that of the usual frequenters of these meetings. Evidently there were among them, as in every case, workmen and artisans; but there were also tradesmen's assistants, shopkeepers, and clerks. This class, which, in Paris, we rarely see in our churches, and which we despair to reach,—these young men, so busied during the day, so eager to seek their pleasures in the evening, were there in numbers,—attentive, serious, drinking in the word of life, for them so new that it seemed as if they were hearing it for the first time.

"I watched them attentively, prepared to detect on their countenances the smile of derision or incredulity—but, no! they were there respectful, spell-bound, their looks as well as their ears engaged in receiving each word, which entered into their heart as the seed into the earth, there to yield its fruit. I venture to affirm, dear friend, that for one acquainted with the youth of Paris, so greedy of amusement, so little inclined to serious things, the scene presented a complete revolution!

"A word, now, respecting our working classes. It is not

my habit to flatter my country; but foreigners themselves have done homage to the prudence and self-restraint manifested by the people of France during the painful crisis which has recently passed. But this wonderful wisdom, to which assuredly we had not been habituated, to what do we owe it, if not to the influence of the Gospel which commences to spread itself among the industrious classes?—for our Master teaches us that the commencement is always to be made with the obscure and the poor. You live in Belleville, dear friend, that suburb, or rather town of workshops and factories; you cannot but have witnessed there, during months past, untold sufferings, untold misery. If, then, all this has been borne with such patience—if in this native country of the *Commune* not the least disorder has arisen, have not your meetings, so tending to produce what is good, so favourite among these poor workmen, done their part? Certainly all the glory belongs to God alone, and not to the unworthy instruments He employs; but let me tell you how I rejoice to see the Gospel thus, by degrees, taking root in the country of Voltaire, and the crowds hungering for the bread of life when the bread that perishes is ready to fail them!

"And now, dear brother, it is not you but all the friends of your work who have need to consider that this station of Rivoli, situated in the most central and business quarter of Paris, and opened to the public every day of the year, involves expenses of rental, of management, of lighting, &c., equal to those of three or four other stations taken together. If, then, the expenses are thus increased, ought not the gifts to increase in the same proportion? England will not weary of the sacrifices she has made in order to spread the Gospel in France in the very moment when these sacrifices begin to bear fruit."

I have already alluded to the friendliness of the Paris municipal authorities. The Gospel may not yet have reached their own hearts, but they see in

it an instrument of order and peace, such as no priest has ever wielded. It has quieted the city of revolutions, and made the worst of its people capable of being governed without bayonets or prisons. These magistrates see, moreover, in the men who are thus gathering the communist crowds, men who can be trusted; men of simple purpose and unselfish aims; no disturbers of the peace, or enemies of social order; and they not only support and sympathise with, but are ready publicly to honour these promoters of the peace of Paris. The honour conferred by men in power and position may not always be an indication of the faithfulness of an evangelist or a pastor; still the following recognition of the Mission and its conductor is well worth recording. When, in 1834, Dr. Chalmers was elected corresponding member of the Royal Institute of France, the men of the Institute thought merely of honouring science and genius. But the tribute to Mr. M'All was not of this nature, and its value consists not so much in the distinction bestowed upon a toiling evangelist, as in the testimony thus borne to the influence of his work :—

"The authorities of Paris have continued to give us all needful facilities, and this has been done with the utmost courtesy and good-will. And in May last we were gladdened by an unexpected recognition of our undertaking on the part of a

great public society, which includes many distinguished representatives of all political and ecclesiastical parties. On occasion of the anniversary gathering of the '*Société Nationale d'Encouragement au Bien*,' held in the Cirque National, a silver medal was presented to us, with the inscription on the accompanying *diplome*, '*pour dévouement à l'humanité.*' One or two sentences translated from the report, read before the vast assembly by Monsieur Henri Arnoul, the venerable secretary, and widely circulated, exhibit the estimate of such an enterprise formed by those viewing it *ab extra*. 'Mr. M'All knew that, in the population of Belleville, there exist sufferings of all kinds,—that moral degradation has its abode there side by side with mental degradation and extreme poverty. Seconded by Mrs. M. and a few friends, he has founded, and subsequently multiplied in Paris, evening meetings, the object of which is to bring light to the mind, and to calm the troubled heart. Wherever he has directed his steps, Mr. M. has been cordially received. His words of sympathy have been responded to by expressions of gratitude. "*La Société d'Encouragement au Bien*" joins in the testimonies of affection which salute the welcome of the benevolent foreigner, and offers him a medal in return for the good he labours to effect.'"

This year brought with it a new feature in the work,—the establishment of a *daily* evangelistic service at the central station in the Rue de Rivoli. No fewer than 367 meetings have been held in the room there during the year, attended in all by upwards of 70,000 persons. This station is in the very centre of gay Paris, and is one of great importance. An officer of the adjoining Hôtel de Ville, a devoted Christian man, who takes a great

interest in the station, said to Mr. M'All, "When the Hôtel de Ville was burning, I prayed that another fire, the sacred flame of the Gospel, might be kindled on the very spot, and here I see my oft-renewed prayer answered." He said this after a crowded meeting, composed, as the week-day evening attendance is, *almost entirely of men.* Night after night the room is filled with the representatives of various classes,—*bourgeois,* tradesmen, clerks, and especially *ouvriers.* The attention is very striking, and at no station is the fondness for hymns more marked. Many a careless passer-by along that gay thoroughfare has been arrested by these sounds of praise. Dr. Fisch is a great helper here; and on the Sabbath afternoons it has more the character of a settled congregation than the others.*

* I give in a note the following statement from the report of 1877, as to "Material Progress:"—

"Our work has again been extended in accommodation, and, still more, in attendance. Four stations have been enlarged, and three new ones founded, giving nearly 1000 additional sittings. The average weekly attendance at the meetings for adults has increased by upwards of 2500.

"Yet at no period of the year have our finances warranted extension unless where special contributions were offered for some definite purpose. Thus, by the liberality of Captain Knox, R.N., we were enabled, in the spring, to add 230 sittings to our deeply-interesting station of Boulevard Ornano, he having devoted the sum required in memory of his late wife. At Batignolles, we have been helped by a kind friend in London towards the cost of a larger room, which has resulted in nearly doubling the attendance. At La Villette and

New fields are entered on; and the same kind of population gathers round the evangelists. Each advance made is a new insight into "the mysteries of Paris;" and no part of that city, even the worst and lowest, seems inaccessible. No one says, "Depart out of our coasts;" every street and lane says, "Welcome." "He that openeth and no man shutteth" is here. He is "found of them who sought Him not." Still, wherever the evangelists go, opposition, if it shows itself for a moment, disappears. The police protect and sympathise.

"At Puteaux, a populous suburb outside the boundaries of Paris, the long-projected station was opened in February. When applying to the Paris authorities for the requisite authorisation, they frankly expressed to us the opinion that, in consequence of the tumultuous and atheistic characteristics of the district, we should find it impossible to work there, and should only bring disappointment and trouble on ourselves. Nevertheless, the permission was granted. On occasion of the opening, the room, which will accommodate 150, was densely crowded; the utmost order prevailed; and at the close, the Mayor of Puteaux and the Commissary of Police, who were both present, expressed their warm sympathy and readiness to protect and aid us. A month later, the Commissary sent to us a message by Monsieur Dumas, Lutheran pastor of Puteaux, to the effect that he 'had

Bercy, our existing places were let to other tenants on long leases. In each case we have obtained much more spacious and eligible rooms. For the former enlargement, we have had the generous aid of Monsieur Fallot and his congregation of the Chapelle du Nord; the other is specially cared for by Mrs. Barbour and friends in Edinburgh."

reported to the Prefecture the large attendances and perfect order of the meetings, and his belief that great good would result in the moral amelioration of the district.' The subsequent history of the place has borne out this happy commencement. Mr. Dumas devotes himself to the work with exemplary assiduity, and receives aid from other brethren in the vicinity. More than this, the entire cost of planting and sustaining the station has been defrayed by special contributions collected by himself and Mr. Fallot.

"Our station of Boulogne-sur-Seine was opened in April in continuation of the devoted labours of Madame Dalencourt, and in the same locality. She herself has lent her valuable help to the effort. The district is one in which the Gospel is little known, and the people, absorbed in their temporal affairs, are difficult to reach. Still, we desire to persevere in the undertaking, believing that the reaping time will come.

"An interesting sketch of this and other departments of the work in which Madame Dalencourt aids us, written by herself, is appended to this report. The French Committee of the Society of Friends, who take so deep an interest in Madame D.'s labours, have allowed us the use of their furniture for the station, and otherwise helped us.

"The twenty-second station, that of the Rue de Meaux, La Villette, has been formed by separating a part of the large new room in the Rue d'Allemagne. The premises having a second entrance in the adjoining street, we are thus enabled to do something for a distinct and much-neglected population. Our esteemed friends, Signor and Mrs. Peretto, have recently taken charge of this infant effort."

The sympathy of French Christians came out in an interesting and peculiar way, which the following extract will show :—

"It is with joy that we pay a renewed warm tribute to the

French Christians of Paris, who, during the year, have given new proof of their sympathy by coming to our aid financially. In April last, so soon as our need was known, they sent, without our solicitation, generous help towards surmounting the crisis. And this followed closely upon a most touching mark of affectionate interest. One day in March, we received a visit from Professor and Madame St. Hilaire, when they handed to us an elegantly inlaid box, inscribed on the outside, '*Voitures*,' inside,—'*A M. et Mme. M'All, témoignage de profonde gratitude des amis de Paris.*' The offerings contained in and accompanying the box amounted to 3930 francs (£117), which we were exhorted to expend in hiring conveyances in order to lessen our fatigue when journeying to our distant stations. Such a mark of delicate kindness on the part of numerous Parisian neighbours (pastors and others) towards us who had, six years ago, come among them as almost unknown strangers, and, not less, the tender affection with which our dear friends accompanied its presentation, left an impress on our heart which can never be effaced."

The Bible classes are vigorously conducted, and this year shows no diminution. Six are now held weekly, with an average attendance of nearly 300. These are for both old and young. The prayer meetings still continue, with the young men's *Fraternal Union Prayer Meeting.* The sewing classes for poor women make progress. Various other smaller and occasional meetings are held; among which is M. Théodore Monod's for religious inquirers at the Ornano station.

The warm hand-shakings, noticed in the reports, at the close of the meetings, put one in mind of

apostolic times. "Greet one another with a holy kiss." "Brotherly love continues." On reopening the Ornano station after enlargement, M. T. Monod wished to ascertain how far the audience had been steady throughout. He asked those who had attended from the beginning to hold up hands; and quite a forest of hands was exhibited.

The incidents of the year are still, as formerly, strikingly illustrative of the nature of the work carried on at the meetings and Bible classes, and also in domiciliary visits. They are various, though of course all bearing more or less on the one point of spiritual benefit received. Without colouring or exaggeration, facts are set down, which by the simplicity and brevity with which they are given, attest their truthfulness, and increase our confidence in the Mission. Readers will not have to complain of embellished narratives or invented scenes.

"I am always happy," said an aged hearer at one of the stations. "God cares for me and guides me. I hold myself ready to go whenever He shall call me away." He had been noted for his bright countenance and eager attention.

Such entries as the following are worth recording:—"A young man, now a worker, had been led to Christ at La Chapelle;" "evidences of a deepening work in the Belleville Bible class;" "several

persons who had attended M. T. Monod's special meetings at Ornano are connecting themselves now with his church;" "news of six or seven members of the Young Men's Christian Association brought out of darkness into light;" "a heart-broken father, who has lost two children, has found rest in the infinite love of God;" "an *ouvrier* of Grenelle, to whom the meetings had been blest, has died in peace;" "Thank you, sir; this is better than the cabaret," said an *ouvrier* at the Rue de Rivoli; "the whole family of an *ouvrier* has come under the power of the Gospel at Rue de la Condamine;" "an attender at Les Ternes, brought out of the darkness of superstitious formalism, and laid upon a sick-bed, requested to have her Christian friends gathered round her, that they might commemorate together the love of Christ: and asked her pastor to say to the company in her name, 'My brethren and sisters in Christ, whether rich or poor, are dearer to me than my relatives who are strangers to Him.'" Mr. Moillet reports the great interest awakened at the Rue Charlot station by the distribution of New Testaments to the *concierges* around, and also the kind way in which domiciliary visits are received in that district, which is the very centre of the city. Mr. Hitchcock reports well of the juvenile work at Les Ternes, and that 135 girls had entered the

school last winter, instructed by twenty ladies. Another regular attender of the meetings had died lately in the hospital, having her Bible always at her side. The hymn which she had specially learned by heart, and delighted to repeat, was that of M. T. Monod, as embodying her hope in death,—

"Sur Toi je me repose,
O Jésu, mon Sauveur!
Faut-il donc autre chose
Pour un pauvre pécheur?
Conduit par ta lumiere
Gardé par ton amour,
Vers la maison du Père
Marchant de jour en jour."

Three extracts from the report (1877) will complete the narrative for this year:—

"Very interesting reports received from some of our friends who distribute the New Testaments to the *concierges*, the gift of Madame de Briançon. The visitors round our Ménilmontant station found not only willing recipients, but, in various houses, the people said, 'We only wish that the English friends had come into our neighbourhood before the terrible struggle [the Commune] instead of after it; for then it would not have taken place.' These unaffected utterances seem to warrant the belief that Christian efforts (those of others as well as our own) in these outlying districts have not been without effect in calming passion and promoting social order.

"Miss ——, who directs our Sunday school at M——, gave us a touching account of a boy eleven years of age. Some weeks previously, he began to attend the school, and afterwards the public service. He listened, from the first, with rapt

attention. When asked, 'Do your parents send you here?' 'No.' 'Are they Christians?' 'No, they do not attend any church, they are sceptics; I come here of my own accord, because I want to learn about Jesus Christ.' Surely a Divine Teacher had silently prepared that child's heart for the vital truth!

"One of our workers, having paused at a book-stall on the *Quai*, felt himself touched on the shoulder. A young man, whom he did not know, inquired, 'Sir, do you consider that treatise on "Prophecy" a reliable one?' 'I do not know you,' remarked our friend. 'But, sir, I know you, and am grateful for the word I have heard you speak in the *réunions*.' 'In what *réunions?*' 'At Belleville' (miles away). He then related that, one night, when passing the gateway of our mission-hall in the Rue de Belleville, the little paper of invitation had been put into his father's hand. Arrived at his home outside the fortifications, he read it: '*Des amis anglais et français désirent vous parler de l'amour de Jésus-Christ.*' 'The love of Jesus Christ,' said he to his wife; 'then we must go one of these evenings, and hear what this is.' 'Now,' added the young man, 'my father and mother and all the family attend as often as possible; and more than this, we have all accepted Christ as our Saviour.' He is himself a member of the 'Fraternal Union' referred to above."

"Our excellent visitor, Madame ——, records about 900 domiciliary visits during the year. Her report commences thus:—'I am greatly encouraged by the cordial welcome I receive, and the great desire the people manifest for a clearer knowledge of the truth respecting the life to come. In general, it is only by slow degrees that they come to comprehend the truth, but when they have once laid hold upon it they go onward faithfully. The persons under serious impressions to whom I referred in last year's report, and whom I continue to visit, are persevering in the right way. Many of them make progress which it is delightful to observe, and exercise a salu-

tary influence around them, while giving evident proofs of their evangelical faith. I can also testify, thank God, that during this year I have witnessed the acceptance of salvation by sinners.' Our friend goes on to specify the case of a poor woman, mother of a family, who, after having lived in total indifference, entered, as if by chance, one evening the *réunion* of Boulevard Ornano. Her attention was arrested, and she became a regular attendant. Our kind visitor perceived that she became anxious and distressed, and, after repeated interviews, drew from her the avowal that, in the meetings, the guilt of her heart had been so discovered to her that it seemed impossible for her to obtain salvation. At length she was enabled joyfully to declare, 'Jesus has triumphed for me; I have found and accepted the pardon of all my sins through His death on the cross.' 'Now,' continues our visitor, 'this mother, who had so neglected her children that, to use her own words, they were as if motherless, unites with me every day in praying that those children may be saved.' 'Madame —— said to me one day, after hearing an address on the new birth, "Formerly, when any one asked me what age I had arrived at in the spiritual life, I was displeased, for I was forced to acknowledge that I was not born as yet: but now, for some months, I have been able to say that I am born again, but I am as yet a mere infant."' Other interesting details contained in this journal must be omitted. A family is mentioned, all the members of which attend with us. After enjoying a comfortable position, for two years they have had a hard struggle for the necessaries of life. Here is their testimony: 'What would have become of us without your meetings?' They acknowledge that 'the promises of the Gospel alone have been their support.' Never have they received or asked any pecuniary relief. At Batignolles, a widow and her two daughters close their shop at the time of each *réunion* in order to be present. The mother said, 'Before coming to the meeting, we lived without religion, but now we cannot dispense with it,—

it is, as it were, our food. To come to the meeting is to us like a refreshing repast.' Another attendant of the same station, visiting in a remote country district, has collected her relations and friends, and endeavoured, in her simple way, to recount to them what she had heard in the meetings."

"Knowing the interest you take in the evangelisation of the working population, and grateful for your sympathy evidenced in granting me the free use of two of your mission-rooms, I am happy to state to you the present position of my working meetings for women. And, first, my *réunion* of the Gare d'Ivry was commenced, as an experiment, in October, 1876. You know how grievously the inhabitants of that district are given up to evil habits, which produce misery and lead to mendicity. Hence, from the beginning, I felt it necessary to insist upon the fact that I was not coming to establish a *Bureau de Bienfaisance*, but simply to bring the Gospel with its consolation to the sufferers, and to read to them the Divine Book in which we learn to love duty, labour, order, economy, &c. For some months, consequently, we rarely gathered more than five or six women each afternoon. After a time, especially as the result of domiciliary visits, the number increased, and now we rarely have fewer than thirty persons.

"A word as to our mode of procedure. The meeting lasts from one to four o'clock. During this time all the women work, either bringing their own work, or knitting, for which we supply the wool. After singing, we sell to them, at a slight loss, the materials for their work, also some vegetables, &c. Singing, reading, reception of their little savings into a Penny Bank, and the lending of books in French and German, follow; and after that, a portion of God's Word is read and explained. Prayer closes the meeting, and when we separate, it is always with the delightful sense that we have passed three hours in the Divine presence.

"Our visits in the homes of the sick and absent bring us in contact with misery of all kinds. They consume much time,

and, although I am aided by my niece and an English friend, we are not able to meet the urgent needs, and I should regard it as a great blessing if the Lord were to put it in the heart of some Christian ladies, of whatever nation, to join us. Madame T——, who has asked from you the use of the room at the Gare d'Ivry for an Industrial School for girls, is about to commence without delay. Thus your mission-room is thoroughly utilised, and this district, in which you have planted the standard of the Gospel, begins to be well worked, the children's services of Thursday and Sunday being also intelligently conducted and very prosperous.

"At Boulogne, after an interval of some months, I have yielded to the earnest desire of some of the women in recommencing a weekly working meeting, not on the former footing, but precisely similar to that of the Gare d'Ivry. The Lord has directed everything, and the temporary suspension of our meetings seems to have awakened our women to the privilege of meeting as a family to study the Bible. When I told them that I returned, not on the former footing, but almost alone with my old Bible, they replied,—'It is better to see you two [*i.e.*, you and your Bible] thus together than not to see you at all.'"

Mr. Maitland Heriot's assistance has been very valuable, and his labours most successful. As his work is "in association with the Paris workingmen's mission" of Mr. M'All, I should have liked to give a full narrative of his labours. But I find that this would require a volume by itself; and perhaps some one may be found to write the story of the Paris mission to the young. I can give but one or two paragraphs, referring my readers to the reports. In 1876, no less than 2660 children

were under instruction. In 1877, these had increased to 3000 :—

"On the last Saturday of the year, while a *fête* was being given by Mr. M'All to the *habitués* of the Belleville station, we gathered the younger portion of the assemblage, consisting of the members of the two unions, and frequenters of the young people's meeting, into an adjoining room. The proceedings began by vigorous eating and heavy drinking (the beverage was coffee). After they had consumed as much as was good for them, we felt the necessity of giving affairs a practical bent, and by turning their thoughts upward from the water of earthly merriment towards the wine of heavenly duty, to make the evening a profitable, as well as a more joyful one. Accordingly, after seeking the Divine benediction, and singing some favourite hymns, we proposed to the meeting, constituted suddenly into a conference, this important question : 'What can *we*, the young men of Paris, do to promote the glory of Christ?' Many friends took part in the most interesting discussion which followed, several members of the Young Men's Union gave us the benefit of their experience, and one or two Christian ladies spoke on behalf of the young of their sex. We separated late and with regret. Never in this country have we seen a meeting more thoroughly animated with the enthusiasm of the true missionary spirit. Thus the old year terminated most hopefully and with large promise for the future.

"Much that is of interest must remain unsaid as regards individual cases of encouragement and blessing. We must, nevertheless, for the two letters quoted in our last report substitute one in this. It was received on New-Year's Day, when we were not quite well :—

"'Paris, *le* 31 *Decembre*, 1877.

"'Une jeune chrétienne, et une jeune convertie de 1877, vous prie de recevoir ses souhaits les plus sincères pour l'an 1878. Dans mes prières de chaque jour, je supplie le Seigneur

de vous garder la santé et de nous accorder le bonheur de vous posséder longtemps au milieu de nous, afin que vous ameniez encore beaucoup d'âmes à notre bien-aimé Sauveur Jésus-Christ. Croyez, je vous prie, cher et bon Monsieur, à toute ma reconnaissance, et recevez les amitiés de votre petite servante et jeune soeur en Jésus-Christ. MARIE N.'"

This work amongst the young was seen by Mr. M'All, from the first, to be of vast importance. Mrs. M'All and he early undertook it; and it has rapidly increased upon their hands.

That this evangelical seed has been so widely sown among the Parisian children is matter of deep thankfulness,—perhaps of more thankfulness than many would concede. Young hearts, they say, are easily touched; and juvenile impressions quickly fade. True, but impressions *revive* as well as fade; and young hearts are easily *re-touched;* all the more easily from being touched before. This we give as the decided conviction, derived from the experience of a long ministry.

Some, leaning to the opposite extreme, would have us believe that the old are hopeless, and that it is to the young that we must direct all our efforts. Not so. It is upon the grown-up population of Paris that the wide impression has been made during the past years of the Mission; and we must say that our ministerial experience is out and out against the discouraging averments of some

religious theorists, that the old are unimpressible, and that a man after the age of thirty or forty "stands little chance" of being converted. In the Acts of the Apostles very little is said about children, in any of the cities, Jewish or Gentile, to which the apostles went. The conversions, so far as the record goes, were all among the old. The truth is, that we have really nothing to do with the *age* of a sinner in preaching the Gospel to him; and speculation or calculation upon this point has often lost sight of the great truth that the same mighty Spirit is needed both for young and old, and that it is by the same Gospel that He works in all.

It is no small matter to have *the truth* deposited in the mind, whether of old or young, and it is an unwise thing to speak disparagingly of "head-knowledge." If the belief of a falsehood, even with "the head," be an evil thing,—an evil thing in itself, and a thing dishonouring to God,—the belief of the truth, even "with the head," must be a good thing, both in itself and before God. The minds of Romanists, moreover, have been so thoroughly steeped in "head-lies," as well as "heart-lies," that even that which is called the "intellectual reception" of the truth is of unspeakable moment, even were it for nothing else than the expulsion of the

innumerable lies that have poisoned the intellect, both of man and child. The triumph of truth over the *intellect* is of itself matter of great rejoicing; only let it be *the very truth* of God,—the *very Gospel* of His grace, and not merely something like it, which deceives and mystifies, by mixing up faith and works, — by confounding the work of Christ upon the cross with the work of the Spirit in the soul. The "foolishness of preaching is one thing," and foolish preaching is quite another. That which saves is THE FINISHED WORK ALONE, without addition, either great or small. That which Christ did 1800 years ago is of itself sufficient to recommend me to God, and as soon as I recognise this, I am in favour with God. I go straight to God to be saved; not to get from Him materials for saving myself. I know of no conditions, save that of taking at once, just as I am, from the hands of Christ, the proffered salvation of the cross.

What the sinner needs is not one who will make up for his deficiencies, but who will *undertake his whole responsibilities;* not a surety who will be security for the balance, but who will pay the whole debt. The revival of mediæval mysticism, which works up a fascinating religiousness by various appliances, and mingles together the "infused" and the "imputed," to obtain a sufficient

righteousness before God, will be of no avail in any aggressive movement against scepticism or superstition. Thomas à Kempis would be a poor substitute for Luther; and sentimental mysticism would not do the bold work of the Reformation theology. The keynote of preaching must still be, "Christ for us;" and the hymns which are to carry life must ring with,—

"Tous les travaux de mes mains
Pour te plaire seraient vains
Lors même qu'en ma détresse
Mes pleurs couleraient sans cesse,
Ils ne sauraient me laver
Toi seul peux et veux sauver!"

CHAPTER VIII.

MISCELLANEOUS: PAST AND PRESENT.

I PROPOSE to wind up my narrative with a somewhat miscellaneous chapter, which will glance both at past and present; as well as look a little into the future. For the sake of order I divide it into several sections. The way in which all these bear upon the contents of this volume will be very obvious. In condensing the report of the last year, I wished to connect with it some things of interest which have suggested themselves in the course of this narrative, but which seemed more suitable for the close.

SECTION I.

CONTRASTS.

The Reformation history of France is too little known. Its pages are full of interest and romance. That land has yielded more martyrs than all Europe together. The blood of the slain saints

reddens it everywhere. Prisons and cells, castles and cottages, caves and mountains, contain histories of bonds and banishment, of fire and sword, of cruelty and darkness, of tears and broken hearts, such as are not to be found in the religious annals of any other country,—save, perhaps, of Spain. For one martyr in England and Scotland there have been five hundred in France.

Yet, strange to say, the Gospel has overspread the former, while it has almost passed away from the latter.

The blood of the martyrs has not always been the seed of the Church; and the "mowing down," of which the old Father spoke, has not always been followed by the thicker growth. A more sorrowful example of this we have not than France;—France, which, three hundred years ago, seemed destined to take her place side by side with Germany and Geneva in raising for Europe the banner of the cross: nay, which promised then to be the leader and teacher of the nations.

When, in the autumn of 1527, Calvin went to Orleans to study jurisprudence, under Pierre de l'Etoile, it might have seemed as if God were preparing a teacher for France, not for Geneva. And no doubt the seed he sowed in his native land, and the harvest he reaped there, within a quarter of a

century, looked as if the Reformation were about to take possession of the whole nation. But, ere the close of the century, the sword and fire of Rome had swept over its cities and villages, slaying or scattering its holiest and wisest and noblest; indicating too plainly that not to France was to be given the honour of any witness-bearing, save that of martyrdom.

When Gerard Roussel, chaplain to the Queen of Navarre, about the year 1530, preached the Gospel in Paris, it looked as if, from within the Church of Rome, a voice was to be heard, whose influence would shake the very citadel. But that voice died away. Roussel would not quit the Church, and his early testimony produced no results.

So one witness after another was silenced or removed; and though their testimonies never wholly died out, yet it soon became evident that France was not to take that lead in Reformation, of which it had given early and noble promise.

It is interesting to mark the way in which Wycliffe, about the middle of the fourteenth century, sowed the seed, broadcast, over England. That bold Reformer sent out lay preachers in all directions, by which procedure, while he scattered the truth, he created also a lay element, which has done great things in England ever since. The itinerant preachers,

staff in hand, without any authority beyond the truth of their message, went over the provinces, preaching in churches when they could get them; when denied these, in streets and market-places, in the fields and roads. Very great was their influence, and very extensive their success, especially as the priesthood did not take alarm immediately; till in the next generation rays of Bible-light had reached almost every part of the kingdom. Wycliffe's preachers were sometimes ignorant enough, but they were the pioneers of a greater movement than they could forecast. This pre-reformation agency did its work for a time: and though soon checked, yet no violent measures were resorted to, or, at least, carried out. There were no martyrdoms. The sword had not yet been drawn, nor the fire kindled. Even Wycliffe died in peace.

The contrast between England and France is to be noted. Every reformer was made to suffer at the hands of Rome. Persecution in its worst forms was familiar to Europe from the earliest days of the sixteenth century.

The publication, a few years ago, of a vast number of hitherto inedited documents,* relating to French

* I refer to the "Bulletin de la Société de l'Histoire de Protestantisme Français: Documents historiques inédits et originaux; 16e, 17e, 18e Siècles." Paris: various years.

Protestantism, has fully shown this, at least up to a certain date. These volumes are of great price, consisting of original letters, decrees, treatises, hymns, narratives, lists of names,—all relating to the Protestant history of France. They are like the volumes of our Maitland Club, or Wodrow Society,—but perhaps more fragmentary and miscellaneous. The martyr-lists are especially valuable, though containing little more than names and places and professions; not like our Scots Worthies, with narrative or anecdote affixed, but simple designations of the sufferers, like monumental stones. The papers extend over more than two centuries.

As we read these old documents and registers of names, we are impressed with the fact that the Gospel must have covered the whole land very widely indeed. It has been said of England, in the age after Wycliffe, that every third man in the kingdom was a Lollard. Of Bohemia, it is still more explicitly affirmed, that at the time of the Reformation, nine-tenths of the people were anti-Papal. I do not know that I should be much beyond the mark if I were saying of the France of that period, that half of her people had opened their ears to the Gospel. Certainly throughout all its provinces the truth of God had gone forth to a wondrous extent. And the question comes up, How did it enter?

We have no full record which can enable us to answer this question in detail. But, in these old letters and contemporaneous histories, we get some glimpses as to the manner in which the light broke in.

The Spirit of God had begun to work everywhere at the beginning of the sixteenth century;—and always in connection with a revived Bible. Quiet spirits in many cities, who had long, in secret, studied the Word, began to be bold and speak out. The sparks went over the land. Other lands helped; or rather the nations helped each other; Germany, France, Switzerland, Italy. The Romish Church took alarm; persecution tried to quench the light, but it spread more and more. Take the following sentence from a manuscript history of d'Aosta, in the Turin Library: "Dans les annees 1535 et 36 jusqu'en 1542, Luther et Calvin, *ces imposteurs abomenables*, profitant du trouble des guerres d'entre Charles V. et Francis Ier faisaient repandre leurs erreurs dans ce duché." *

A few zealous men, raised up in the land itself, or coming from other lands, preached the Gospel, and the Word "grew mightily and prevailed." Under the most withering influences of Popish cruelty, the Gospel proved itself the power of God;

* "Bulletin," vol. ix., p. 163.

and France had almost become Protestant. Not the cities only, but the villages, had received the truth. How, by the persecution of two centuries, the truth was expelled, and infidelity reigned, I need not here inquire. It was the *entrance* of the light that I wished to notice.

In very different circumstances, and by very different agencies, is the light now introduced. By no fiery or bloody persecution is the progress of the Gospel now stayed. Is it to spread as extensively and as rapidly as it did three centuries ago?

The Seventh Annual Report of the Mission to the Working-men of Paris helps us a little to answer this question. In it we see not only the consolidation, but the advancement of the work. We see also not only the many quarters into which it is penetrating, but the many classes of which it is laying hold.

Never has it been so in France before. There have been occasions during the last fifty years in which some glimpses of liberty for the preaching of evangelical truth appeared. But these were on a very small scale. A little liberty under Louis Philippe; a little more under Napoleon; but only since the last war has the liberty been complete, and fully available for the work of evangelisation.

The contrast between Reformation days and the

present is as striking as it is instructive. Royal and priestly power united once to stamp out Protestantism, and to quench it in blood. The following letter, written by a young Swiss Romanist, residing in Paris at the College of Clermont, in 1572, will best illustrate the contrast to which we refer. His name was Joachim Opser, from the Canton of St. Gall. Like the Papists of his day, with the Pope at their head, he exulted over the St. Bartholomew Massacre. His letters are the echoes of the unbounded jubilation which rung through the College of Clermont and through all Paris, when, on the 24th of August, 1572, the Popish assassins made the city flow with Protestant blood. The letter is addressed to the Abbot of St. Gall, and was sent by the hand of Studer Von Winkelbach, who was deputed by Charles IX. to justify the deed of blood to the Swiss Cantons :—

"I was never in greater haste to write to you, at least I have never done so with greater pleasure. France is doing well, and we are as well as possible, thanks to the Most High! Although I have to write to you at length of our private affairs, I must first tell you briefly of the joy of the Parisians ; the bearer of this letter will give you full and authentic details.

"On the 18th August was the marriage of the King of Navarre with the Princess Margaret, sister of the King; but oh! joy of the Christian people, the 24th August has put an end to the transports of joy which this event occasioned to the heretics. For the Admiral (Coligny) La Rochefoucauld, with

the most eminent men of the party, have been miserably massacred by order of the King. Their bodies are even now lying on the public squares, exposed to the view of passers-by; but I leave to Captain Studer to relate all these things by word of mouth."

The bearer of the letter having been delayed, Joachim writes again on the 26th August:—

"I will now transmit to you some details which will cause you real pleasure; for I do not think I shall weary you with writing more particularly of an event as unexpected as it is useful to our cause, and which not only fills the whole Christian world with admiration, but also lifts them to the height of rejoicing. * * * * *

The Admiral perished miserably on the 24th, with all the heretic French nobility (without exaggeration). Immense carnage! I shuddered to see the river full of corpses, naked and horribly abused. Hitherto the King has only pardoned the King of Navarre, who to-day went to mass with King Charles, so that great hopes are entertained of him. The sons of Condé are in prison by the King's orders, but are in great danger, for the King will very likely visit these obstinate champions of heresy with exemplary punishment. Every one agrees in praising the prudence and magnanimity of the King, who, after having, so to speak, by his goodness and indulgence, fattened them as beasts, has had them suddenly slain by his soldiers. All the heretic booksellers that could be found were massacred and thrown naked into the river. Raums, who had leapt from his bedchamber, is stretched without clothing on the river brink, pierced by innumerable dagger-wounds. There are none, not even women, who are not killed or wounded.

"As to the murder of the Admiral. When the Swiss, under the orders of the Duke of Anjou, had broken open the doors, Conrad, followed by Leonhard Grünenfelder of Glaris and

Martin Koch, reached the Admiral's room, which was on the third storey of the house, they first killed his servant. The Admiral was in his dressing-gown, and at first no one would lay hands on him ; but Martin Koch, bolder than the others, struck the wretch with his axe, Conrad gave him the third blow, and at the seventh blow he fell dead against the chimney of his room. By order of the Duke de Guise, his body was thrown out of the window, and, after putting a cord round his neck as a malefactor, it was exposed as a spectacle to all the people while being dragged to the Seine. Such was the end of this pernicious man, who, not only in his life brought many to the verge of destruction, but in his death drew a host of noble heretics with him to hell."

Mr. M'All's twenty-three stations,—the 8000 old and 3000 young in Paris under Protestant instruction,—are the exhibitions of a wondrous change. Disgusted with Popery, wearied with infidelity, France is seeking rest in the simple Gospel of Christ, asking her way from the crucifix to the cross, from the mass-book to the Bible, and wondering if the liberty of Christ be not better than the bondage of the Pope, if the *Cantiques populaires* be not more intelligible, at least to the *ouvrier*, than the Latin *Hymni Ecclesiæ* of the Parisian Breviary.

SECTION II.

The Salle Evangélique.

This hall is a neat and substantial structure of wood, capable of seating 600 persons. It was erected

at the conjunct expense of the Evangelical Alliance and the Paris Mission, costing upwards of £1200. It is now the property of the latter, according to agreement, and will be removed to some place where it may better serve the purpose of a mission-station. There is, however, great difficulty in obtaining a site for it, as the price of ground in Paris is so very high.

Even were it to be taken to pieces to-morrow, it has done noble missionary work in many ways, and has been a wonderful centre for numerous agencies of various kinds. Its six months' story is quite a peculiar one; and many eyes, from many regions of the earth, are looking back upon it with strange interest, as the birthplace of new thoughts and longings, the starting-point of a new course in their eternal history.

Our sketch of this, however, must be brief. Some graphic pen would be needed to do justice to its strange scenes, and to describe the crowds, from almost every nation under heaven, that came to gaze, or to hear, or to buy, or to receive the gifts handed out to them, in the shape of books and Testaments and tracts. During the last few weeks of the Exhibition, the whole peasantry of France flocked to the spectacle, invited by Government, and by means of cheap fares, enabled to come from

the most distant parts. They were not sent empty home, but received Scripture Portions and tracts; so that into all the parishes and villages of France the Gospel of Christ was sent. Never had there been such a singular opportunity of sowing the seed. No agencies could have been set on foot by any mission, sufficient for such an immense work. Time, men, money, would have been required; and, after all, the work could not have been completely accomplished, nor the remote districts thoroughly penetrated. Now, in the course of a few weeks, without any new agency or any cost, the Word is sent out everywhere. God gathers the peasantry of France together, and the Divine message is put into their hands to carry back to their relations and children. Within one month the whole land is reached, and the truth deposited in every parish.

"Two French evangelistic meetings were held daily in the *Salle*, without intermission, during the whole period of the *Exposition*. On some days this number was increased to three and even four. It was at the special request of the Paris Committee of the Alliance that we undertook the organisation and management of these services. The numbers in attendance and the interest manifested increased to the close. On some hot summer afternoons the hearers were comparatively few; but on Sundays, and on all favourable days, it was delightful to see the passers-by crowding to the spot, and to observe the eagerness with which many listened, as to a new and surprising discovery. In all, during the *Exposition*, 433 French *réunions*

d'appel were held, attended by 98,328 persons, which number has subsequently been increased to 100,000. In addition, a series of meetings was held in the German language, conducted by M. le Pasteur Frisius; and some efforts were made to reach the Spanish and Italian visitors. It is worthy of record, as evidencing the cordial sympathy of our French friends, that 36 *pasteurs* of Paris, and 20 laymen (including evangelists, students, &c.), besides upwards of 30 others, from various parts of France and elsewhere, took part in these services. Here, as everywhere else, the hymns, including those kindly prepared by Miss Blundell and by the Religious Tract Society, evidently possessed a great charm. To that Society, as also to the Committees of the British and Foreign Bible Society and of the Bible stand, we were indebted for the tracts and Scripture Portions distributed at the close of each meeting. The attacks of certain Ultramontane journals on the entire series of Christian activities thus pursued might be regarded as an undesigned tribute to the united testimony for the glorious truth of the Gospel, which, in harmony, we were enabled to bear.

"Besides the evangelistic *réunions*, several series of interesting *Conférences* were held in the *Salle*, under the auspices of the Evangelical Alliance. At the meeting for thanksgiving held when the *Exposition* was about to close, among other gratifying testimonies was that of M. Abric, Protestant pastor of Passy (in which the *Salle* is situated), who described the effect produced in his own congregation, both in bringing new attendants and in the spiritual quickening of others who had previously been 'hearers only.'

"Adding the similar series of *réunions d'appel* conducted by our esteemed friend Pastor Armand-Delille and his assistants at the *Porte Rapp*, we feel that the good seed was widely sown at the gates of the 'World's Fair,' and according to the Divine promise, the harvest will certainly follow.

"But while such a work must, to a great extent, be that of

'casting bread upon the waters,' we rejoice to be able to add the record of various instances of decided turning to the Lord through these services in our *Salle*. One case is that of a Government schoolmaster from the Haute Savoie, who, after speaking, with tears, to one of our young evangelists of his wish to understand and take to heart the new discovery of truth, wrote to us from his distant home, stating that the addresses and the little books given to him had 'brought a flood of light into his mind,' and desiring to make a deeper acquaintance with the Gospel. Another instance is that of a lady, teacher of a school, a Roman Catholic, who, amazed and overjoyed in view of the doctrine of salvation by grace, has braved every sacrifice, and connected herself with one of the evangelical churches.

"Some of the incidents were very characteristic and affecting. A venerable gentleman, after attending for the third or fourth time, said to us, with great feeling, 'Alas! I am nothing better than an old disciple of Plato; but I see that there is much truth in what is spoken here. And, above all, the prayer at the close was touching, was it not?' Another intelligent man, after hearing the Lord's Prayer, desired to 'buy the book in which these wonderful expressions were found.'"

Bibles and Gospels in *twenty-two* languages were sold or given away. Of Gospels and Epistles, nearly a million and a-half were distributed in French. The demand for other languages was, of course, much smaller. But it is interesting to note the different nations which thus applied for the Word. Not only do we find German, Italian, Spanish, Russian, and Dutch applicants, but Jewish, Greek, Arabian, Bohemian, and Basque. And if the larger figures attached to some of the nations strike us,

we linger over the smaller ones, wondering what may be the result. Japan asks only for 81; Turkey for 20; Persia for 12; but these are going into regions where no Bible, perhaps, has hitherto penetrated; and where, but for this great Exhibition, it might never have come.

In a private letter, Mr. Dodds thus writes of the *Salle*:—

"In regard to the Salle Evangélique,—now closed with the great Exhibition,—though, from the passing character of the audience, much of the fruits of the meetings will never be known here, we have ample proofs of real good having been done. On the closing day a gentleman came to Mr. M'All, expressing regret that this was the last Sunday, and adding, with tears in his eyes, that the words he had heard there had brought new light to his soul. Madame ——, formerly a strict Romanist, is an outstanding witness to blessing received in the *Salle*. She has made great sacrifices, and her former friends stand aloof from her since she joined a Protestant church, but she is enabled to hope in God. M—— spoke at one of our meetings with great life,—like one who had himself been greatly refreshed, and had received a fresh baptism of the Holy Spirit. His words greatly gladdened our hearts, and caused a song of thanksgiving to spring up. He told us of the unusual interest in God's Word that he had found in visiting among the people,—that persons never known to read it before, were now found doing so; fathers surrounded by their children, and whole families together, reading the Testament, or Scripture Portions, received at the Kiosque. He had also met groups of men in the park, seated on the forms, reading the Scriptures, and was sometimes stopped by them, and requested to explain what they were reading. Above all, he rejoiced over individual

conversions, and, in some cases, over whole families changed, and openly confessing Christ."

The Pentecostal gift of tongues has not been vouchsafed to the Church in these last days. The scene, so briefly but graphically sketched in the second chapter of the Acts, has not been witnessed amongst us. But something very like it has. God has not repeated Himself in the *mode* of sending out His messengers. He has taken another way; a way which, so far as dispersion of the truth is concerned, has been no less effective and wonderful. He has not used the living voice to speak in the various languages of earth; but He has used the printing-press of the nineteenth century to convey His message to twice as many nations as were spoken to by apostles. The wonder expressed by many visitors of the Kiosque, on receiving Bibles or Gospels in their own tongue reminds us of the same kind of wonder uttered in Jerusalem 1800 years ago,—"How hear we every man in our own tongue wherein we were born? . . . And they were all amazed, and were in doubt [in bewilderment], saying one to another, What meaneth this?"

The following letter from Mr. Frank M'Kinnon will illustrate the above remarks:—

"All who have taken part in the grand distribution of God's Word at the Bible Kiosque must have felt it to have been a

blessed privilege. Who could have remained cold or unmoved while the teeming multitude, like a stream, poured from the principal entrance and passed by the Kiosque to receive the unspeakable gift of glad tidings 'without money and without price'? At times it was most difficult to convince the passers-by that the distribution was gratuitous. 'Passez par ici; c'est gratuit; il n'y a rien à payer,' was barely sufficient; and many an unbelieving one would pass by, till the example and faith of the others caused him also to draw near and put out his hand for a book. Many a foreigner would stand and gaze at the pretty building, unable to understand either what was being said or done. With curious glance he would scan the invitations, written in various languages, till his eye would fall on his own; and then, with marked pleasure, he would approach and ask for 'a Russian,' or 'an Italian,' or 'a Spanish,' or 'a Chinese,' as the case might be.

"It was most interesting to observe the mode in which the gift was received. Almost invariably it was accepted with a hearty 'Merci beaucoup!'

"Now and then an infidel or sceptic would lay it down with a look of sarcasm or contempt, as if they, and they alone, knew the depths of wisdom.

"Some would tear it in pieces to express the enmity of their heart.

"Others, moved by fear, would quickly yet respectfully return it.

"Sometimes a child would receive a sound blow from his mother for daring to stretch out his hand for an 'heretical book.'

"The questions, and utterances too, were both interesting and amusing:—

"'What is it?'

"'How much?'

"'In French?'

"'A present!'

"'La propagande protestante !'

"'La Bible !'

"'Good books !'

"'Bad books !'

"'The *English* religion !'

"'Nothing to pay? That's good.'

"'*Here* there is nothing to pay; with *them* it is quite the contrary: pay, pay, pay, *nothing* without money.'

"To all these remarks our answer was, 'The precious Word of God without money and without price.' 'The glad tidings of salvation for nothing.' 'Take and read the Book that all should have.'

"A fact worthy of notice, and one which speaks much for the truth of the Gospel, is that nothing but evangelical truth was offered to meet the spiritual wants of that vast multitude, drawn from all parts of the civilised world for pleasure or business. No other sect or religion was represented. Neither Jew nor Catholic, Mohammedan nor infidel, felt deeply enough the truth of the doctrines to warrant his coming and sacrificing time and money in propagating them. Only those who had felt the '*power* of God' in their souls deemed it worth while carrying on such an expensive and difficult undertaking. 'Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.' 'They that sow in tears shall reap in joy.' The seed has been thrown broadcast. Some has been picked away by the enemy; some has fallen into stony ground, some among the thorns, and some into good ground. Let us pray earnestly that, watered by the Holy Spirit, *much* may be found 'after many days' to the glory of Christ."

The following extracts from the "Kiosque" report help to fill up the extraordinary picture, which only those who witnessed the scenes can fully realise :—

"The Kiosque itself was exceedingly pretty, and was quite in harmony with the surrounding temporary structures erected

for the occasion. The various texts decorating the panels of the hexagonal structure at once arrested the eye and attention of passers-by. The words came with singular newness to a people, the masses of whom are ignorant of the Word of God. The bulk of Frenchmen may be divided into three classes: the devotees of Rome, the infidel, and the absolutely ignorant. The Romanist has an *idea* of some of the teachings of God's Word, the infidel is wrapped up in his worldly wisdom, and the ignorant are impressed by either of the two former; but when the message of salvation is boldly declared, and Christ Jesus exalted, as the Son of God and Saviour of mankind, all are impressed, and it has been seen that vast multitudes have been led to inquire for themselves regarding a matter professedly affecting their eternal welfare. *Fifteen thousand parts of the Bible*, chiefly separate Gospels, were put into the hands of persons of all ranks and classes who applied for them on the very first day. Some well-wishers were apprehensive lest the movement might produce a disturbance by arousing the fanaticism and ill-will of the populace; but a few moments sufficed to dispel this illusion, for never was there a greater desire evinced to obtain the precious gift; and friends came gladly forward to personally assist in the arduous task of meeting clamorous demands. It was a wonderful sight. To prevent accidents from happening through the tremendous pressure round the Kiosque, the windows had to be closed again and again. '*C'est l'Evangile,*' they cried; and down all the avenues, in trams, buses, cabs, and vehicles of all descriptions, in *cafés* and on steamboats, indeed in every direction, persons might be seen perusing the books they had received, and it was astonishing to remark the almost universal interest manifested. The crowd itself was quite a picture, being largely made up of people of different nationalities dressed in the respective costumes of their countries. Thus Turks, Spaniards, Arabs, Zouaves, Italians, in their national costumes, quaintly dressed Chinese, soldiers in different uniforms, mingled among well-

dressed Parisians in the crush to the windows. No exception was made,—rich and poor, young and old, male and female, were supplied each in turn; a respectful thanks being invariably given by way of response. As might have been expected, such a work could not be carried on without Satan seeking to hinder: for some made derisive remarks, though a kindly word soon disarmed opposition, for we know nothing but Christ and Him crucified. Very few copies were destroyed. After the day's work, those who had been engaged in it kneeled down with overflowing hearts, and thanked God for the gracious opening He had afforded for making known the Gospel of His dear Son; for the honour conferred in permitting them to participate in it, and for a blessing upon their labours."

"Italians, Russians, Poles, Greeks, Turks, Dutch, Danes, Swedes and Norwegians, Hungarians, Bohemians, and Basques, and negroes from Angola, Loando, and Senegal, were among those who visited us and received the Scriptures; and a record of the various conversations held among them would of itself constitute an intensely interesting volume.

"The work increased in importance and extent as the Exhibition advanced. The demand was at times so great that it was no easy task to keep up the supply of books. Readers of the Gospels were to be met everywhere in Paris, in the public gardens, in omnibuses, seated on the Boulevards, and on walking through the streets. M. Abric, pastor at the Evangelical Church of Passy, in whose district the Exhibition was situated, at the closing meeting of the services in the Salle Evangélique, gave the following testimony of the work carried on at the Kiosque Biblique. In his pastoral visitation, he said, he found men surrounded by their families reading the Word of God, whose custom before was far otherwise. Often he met with groups of men in the Bois de Boulogne, reading the Portions of Scripture given away at the Kiosque, and often was appealed to for an explanation of some passage not well

understood. Still more encouraging was the testimony of the rich blessing which he had himself received as pastor of the Passy congregation. Souls, he said, had been revived, whole families had been added to the Church, and many conversions had taken place."

"The happy and blessed work at our Kiosque began in right earnest at an early hour yesterday morning. The grand *cortége* had to pass our Kiosque, and you may therefore easily imagine what crowds of people we had around us. I never saw anything like it, not even in the Exhibition of 1867. Early in the morning our own agents, together with a band of other Christian workers, assembled in our Kiosque, and implored the blessing of our gracious Lord upon the good seed about to be sown. Encouraged by the precious promises of a covenant-keeping God, all were refreshed and strengthened to do battle against sin and Satan, seeing the sole weapon to be employed was the sword of the Spirit.

"No sooner were the windows of the Kiosque opened, than crowds flocked to them to obtain Gospels. Language utterly fails me to give you an idea of the impressiveness and solemnity of the scene. The whole place at the Trocadéro was one mass of human beings. Persons of all ranks and from many countries, rich and poor, could be seen struggling for a portion of the Word of God, with, in almost every instance, an expression of joyful thanks. I only noticed one copy being torn up. This was done by a so-called gentleman, who threw it into the face of one of the distributors. Among the crowd were large numbers of soldiers, sailors, officers, and policemen, to whom we gave by preference. Also several priests came up and received portions of the Word of God. The best idea of the eagerness of the populace to get the books you may gather from the fact that we had to shut the windows of the Kiosque more than a dozen times to lessen the pressure of the crowd.

"An English gentleman came up and asked one of the distributors how and by whom this work was carried on. He

directed him to me. When I told him that it was done by voluntary contributions, he gave me £5 for the work. I commenced to explain the effort to him, but he said, 'I and my two daughters have watched your work for some time, and were delighted to see the people flocking to you for the books ; I don't require to know more, it is a most blessed work.'"

"This summer in Paris will be long remembered as one of the most eventful for many years—eventful not by reason of blood and war, but for the wonderful array of the achievements of science, invention, and art, as seen in the *Exposition.* This has been an amazing centre of attraction, not only to the French people in particular, but to the world in general. Every visitor to Paris must have been struck with the gathering together of individuals from among the different nations of the earth, more especially by the numbers of people from the East. Among these may be seen the noble-looking Indian, with his stately gait. Looking at such, his bearing so grand and self-possessed, one wonders what he thinks of the Westerns as he mingles with 'us meaner things.' Then there are Jews, Turks, and Mussulmans, along with the German, the Swede, the Spaniard, and the Italian. Among the Orientals, there are perhaps none who seem to be more at home than the Chinaman, as he moves about in his own part of the Exhibition. He is quick-witted, and full of humour, his dress always suited to the weather. When the sun is fierce, it is a mass of snowy whiteness (giving an idea of delicious coolness), with a stout umbrella overhead, the long tail of sleek, plaited hair adding greatly to effect in the picturesque appearance of this wonderful Eastern ; whilst on cooler days his attire is different, being then more substantial, and showing a combination of fine artistic colour.

"It would be most instructive to know what impressions these people will carry back with them of European life and manners. Many of them, it is believed, will take with them a priceless treasure, even the Gospel of the grace of God. Among the different works done in Paris at this time for the advance-

ment of the kingdom, one of the chief has been the distribution of the Word. This has been going on all during the Exhibition, at the Kiosque of the Crystal Palace Bible Stand—week after week, Sunday after Sunday. To those who have not seen it, it is almost impossible to give an idea of that great sight. By the rules of the Society, the Gospels are given gratuitously, one to each person in his own language, thereby recalling the old days when each man in his own tongue heard 'the wonderful works of God.' As the multitudes pass by, the Gospels are offered to them, either from the window of the Kiosque or by some one standing outside. One hears the words quietly spoken, 'Acceptez, acceptez, messieurs; c'est gratuit; c'est une portion de la Parole de Dieu; c'est l'Evangile.' Gladly are the little books taken, and often the receivers appear to go on their way rejoicing. Many of them, having occasion to pass frequently, evidently take the opportunity to make a complete set of the Gospels, and ask for the different colours: 'Donnez-moi un bleu, un vert, un jaune,' &c. &c. Thus millions of copies have been distributed."

"Upon the other side of this *Salle* stood the Kiosque of the Crystal Palace Bible Stand, covered with well-selected life-giving texts in French, &c., such as 'God so loved the world, that he gave His only-begotten Son,' &c. (John iii. 16, 17). Thus they who 'ran might read.' From its open windows were distributed, in twenty-two of the languages of the world, one million and a-half of Gospels and Testaments. Numbers came and sought for them, prince and peer and peasant, and even priest.

"I would to God that 'a great multitude might become obedient to the faith.' Children eagerly besought, and priests anxiously and respectfully asked for the words of eternal life. I saw this, and so can attest it. Sometimes a carriage would drive up. Perhaps it was Madame MacMahon, who bought two Bibles. Again, it would be the Prince and Princess of Wales, who took great interest in the work, and were presented

with a copy of the smallest Bible in the world.* The opportunity given of God was not neglected, and the harvest at the reaping day will, with the Divine blessing, be bountiful. The sight was noble. The great space inside and outside of the Trocadéro was often thronged. I have watched the people, sometimes nearly 100,000, at others nearly 200,000, like successive waves of the sea, passing in dense masses the Pont d'Iéna, and pouring out of the Trocadéro gates.

"Outside the Kiosque there would be hurrying crowds, whilst inside the quiet distributors were handing out the priceless treasure of the truth 'without money and without price,' so fertilising and blessing the world."

So much for the distribution. But this was only a part of the work done in connection with the *Salle.* The Word was preached by the living voice; and (it is estimated) was heard by above a hundred thousand people.

But I must not linger over these scenes, so

* The *Times* of 3rd November, 1878, has the following paragraph:—"The Prince and Princess of Wales, accompanied by Sir Philip Owen, Colonel Probyn, and Mr. Sykes, paid a visit yesterday to the Kiosque of the Crystal Palace Bible Stand Committee, opposite the Trocadéro. They expressed great interest in the work, particulars of which were given them by Mr. James Alexander, who has had the superintendence of it, and accepted a copy of the smallest Bible in the world; a book printed at Oxford in minute type, and on very thin, silky paper. On leaving, the Prince and Princess, each, made a handsome contribution to the fund. The Kiosque will close this day week. Nearly a million and a-half of Gospels and New Testaments, in twenty-two languages, have been given to applicants at its wickets, the number last Sunday alone being 41,000; and English, French, and other influential visitors have evinced cordial sympathy with the undertaking, which is regarded as having been highly successful."

marvellous, so unique, and so cheering. Mr. M'All's workers were, in addition to their ordinary labours, busy at the *Salle* and the *Kiosque*. How they were able to undergo this increase of labour is a wonder; especially when we take into account the distances between their several stations and the Trocadéro.

SECTION III.

The Latest Good News.

Last year's report (1878) is worthy of being studied. The work develops and ramifies; and one feels in reading the narratives of the different departments that they are not coloured; or rather that very much remains untold. Indeed, from what we have ourselves heard, there is much that could not be made public; and yet, that which remains untold is more interesting than that which the report narrates.

The stations still continue to swell out, and to require enlargement. New ones also are begun. Numbers are still rising. No diminution of earnest listening anywhere. Cases of deep interest are occurring weekly. The labourers are cheered in their toil by no small measure of success, both among old and young. But the cry is for more

labourers.* There is often difficulty in supplying the stations properly; and the burdens are often heavy. Several changes have occurred among the workers, some having left; but their places are partially filled up by others, though by no means to the extent desired. Occasional helpers and visitors have not been few; but these can only imperfectly do the work, though their services are greatly prized. Adult classes, prayer meetings, *ouvroirs* are still carried on with vigour; and domiciliary visitations proceed earnestly and perseveringly. The lending libraries are in active operation under the superintendence of Mr. Dodds; and this department of the Mission, according to

* "If we had only men and means, France is white to the harvest. There is a spirit in the meetings, among the *men* especially, which is most encouraging: a readiness to hear and to understand, and a response to the teaching, which is more than passing in its duration and effects. One who calls himself 'an old disciple of Plato' is an eager listener at the *Salle*, and, we think, a believer groping his way. He speaks now like one whose heart is touched. I conversed with a poor man at Rivoli the other night, shabbily but neatly dressed. I find that he reads over every night the passages of the New Testament which he hears in the meeting. I promised him a whole Bible, as I learn from Mme. T——, the Bible-woman, that he is too poor to buy one. She tells me that he has come for two years, and that he is entirely changed,—his very face is different; and his neatness of person, even in poverty, was the next thing she remarked. He goes now to Dr. Fisch's church, and attends his Bible class. This is the fourth case of the kind within a few months in this station alone, and there are similar cases in other stations."—*Private letter of* Mr. Dodds, 20*th February*, 1879.

his report (p. 18), "has by degrees grown in size and importance, and may justly be said to fill what would otherwise be a blank in its completeness." But greater variety of tracts is demanded; and Mr. Dodds is in communication with the London Tract Society on the subject. That Society has already done noble work in Paris, and is preparing to meet the wants of the Mission more fully. Indeed, all the religious societies of England and Scotland are throwing themselves into the Paris work with right goodwill. They have become thoroughly alive to the greatness of the enterprise and to the exigencies of the time. We are sure that they will not grudge the additional draught upon their resources; and we are as sure that their constituents and subscribers will heartily sustain them in any such increase of liberality for such a movement and in such a crisis.

Of the *ouvroirs* of Gare d'Ivry and Boulogne-sur-Seine, Madame Dalencourt thus writes* :—

"At the Gare d'Ivry, seventy-eight mothers attend, more or less regularly, my Wednesday meeting, the average being thirty-eight. You know how degraded and wretched, in many ways, is the population of this district; and often the French and English friends who help me join with me in saying how

* Madame Dalencourt is a devoted lady who, since the disasters which befell her country some years ago, has never ceased to pray for it, and to labour among the mothers of Paris.

good the Lord has been in sending you there, and us after you.

"Our little savings bank has led many to form habits of economy; the lending library has brought several husbands, sons and brothers of our women, into the habit of passing their leisure-hours at the fireside, and a considerable number of persons have acquired a relish for a pure literature of which, beforetime, they had no knowledge. Three marriages have taken place among our people, in cases where that sacred rite had been neglected, and another is to follow. We regard it as a sign of real moral progress that we have to combat less than formerly with the mendicity which so abounds in this district. We visit all our women in their homes, and experience has proved to us that, usually, more amelioration is brought into a family by repeated visits and friendly counsels than by giving money, &c. Besides, we have various means of helping without pauperising them,—our savings bank, where many make deposits in order to redeem articles from the pawnbroker's, until they shall have forgotten the way thither,—our materials for work, vegetables, &c., bought by us wholesale, and sold to them at a slight loss. Best of all, some of them begin to believe that it is true that God loves them, and that brings forbearance and patience into their mutual relations; and they better understand why we approach and take by the hand some poor or despised woman who was hiding herself at the extremity of the room or behind a pillar.

"Respecting Boulogne-sur-Seine, each Thursday, besides a school (or children's religious class) frequented by forty-four boys and thirty-three girls, we have a women's meeting exactly like that of Gare d'Ivry. Their number rarely exceeds twenty-five; but one feels oneself there to be in an atmosphere of piety and love, surrounded by the truly converted and those who are seeking the Lord. Our seven years' and your two years' work there are manifestly blessed. They resemble a large family or a little congregation.

"One day, before our accustomed meditation, I asked them on what subject they would wish me to speak. After a moment's pause, one said, 'On the love of Christ; it is that which we least understand, and that which does us the most good.' Another added, 'Oh speak on the promise that if we believe in Jesus our family also shall be saved.' A third begged me to speak 'on the duty of reading the Bible aloud to our husbands in the evening when they are smoking, and to persuade our sons to come to the meetings.'

"Dear Mr. M'All, I joyfully accept your recent offer to hold another women's meeting in the new mission-hall you anticipate to open in the district of Mont Parnasse. I feel assured that there also we shall be blessed. I feel increasingly happy to labour for the Lord Jesus and my compatriots side by side with you, and I see more and more of the real good accomplished by your meetings, and of the simple and unobtrusive way in which they adapt themselves to the tendencies of our Parisian people. Some weeks ago, one of our women of the Gare d'Ivry had to leave, in order to live in the centre of Paris. 'I do not yet know,' she said to me, 'where I shall reside, but it must be near some one of the *Conférences M'All* (the name by which they style the meetings), for I can no longer do without it, it is my one comfort.' She has gone to live in a small street beside your station of the Rue de Rivoli.

"On the first night of this new year, I was presenting before the Lord my family, my friends, and my beloved country. Respecting the last, the words of M. Rosseeuw St. Hilaire came into my mind, 'Paris is now encircled by an evangelistic girdle,' and in thanking God for having done so great things among us, I besought Him so to multiply your mission-stations that Paris and all France may not only be encircled but covered with them!"

And again—

"At Boulogne-sur-Seine we have never more than twenty-

five present, but in that little meeting Christian love abounds. There are souls that have been born anew, and others who are entering on the narrow way, and earnestly wish to be taught. One of the most striking signs of their spiritual progress is that they love one another, are kind to and help each other. One might say that they are a great united family, or a devout little congregation. Several have brought their husbands, and not without difficulty, to Mr. M'All's meetings. One of them is learning to read, and must have her lesson out of the New Testament, or from the hymn-book, '*that the first use of her knowledge may be for the good of her soul.*' One died very lately in peace. Two are trying to introduce the habit of reading the Bible aloud in their families. Referring to this, one of them said to me quite recently, 'What troubles me is that my husband always asks for explanations; I can answer easily for myself, but it is difficult for others; can you not lend me a book, which explains truth in a simple way, as the gentlemen and ladies do, who speak to us? That would be very useful to me.' Another said, 'My husband knows more than I do; it is he who explains; but what troubles me is that, when I speak of reading, he says to me, "Listen, wife: if you want me to hear you to the end, let me lie down, give me my pipe, and read away; I shall then be as happy as a king."' She added, 'I do not dare to say anything, for every evening he is very tired; however, he listens well, and often says, "Read me that again."' She was glad when I said to her, that it was well worth while to go on as she was doing, rather than to show that she was annoyed, and not sympathise with her tired husband."

Madame Dalencourt has mothers' meetings in three of our halls in Paris.

Some of the more striking incidents of the year are thus briefly recorded by Mr. M'All. They indicate the true progress of the work; and, notwith-

standing some sameness (as in such narratives there must always be), are wonderfully diversified. By those interested in the work, they will be read as the most important items of the report:—

"The funeral of the celebrated M. —— took place immediately before our meeting at ——. The mission-room, usually filled, was densely crowded by those returning from the cemetery. Many of these entered from curiosity, doubtless, and were unacquainted even with the design of such a meeting. Among them, three stalwart men were noticed, evidently predisposed to treat the occasion with proud disdain. After a time, their aspect changed, and they became eager listeners. Our friends Messrs. Peretto and Saillens exhibited the radical defect of the most benevolent and gifted of human characters without the Divine Saviour. At the close, these three men stepped up to the conductor, saying, 'Allow us to shake hands with you before leaving; we wish to say to you that you ought, if possible, to open *Salles de Conférences* like this in all the quarters of Paris. All that has been spoken respecting Jesus Christ this afternoon is true and good; we Parisians have wrong ideas of Him and need to be set right. Try, then, to open similar places elsewhere.'

"The Report of the *Société Chrétienne du Nord* for 1876-7 contains the following paragraph:—Pastor Lorriaux said, 'I was speaking some time ago in a meeting in Belfast, and at the close a young man, waiter in a public dining-room, came up to me and gave me half-a-sovereign, saying, "I am a Frenchman; I heard the Gospel preached in Paris by Mr. M'All, and I desire to aid in spreading it."' Mr. Lorriaux added, 'How many others (among the attendants of evangelistic meetings) carry away the truth hidden in their heart, which afterwards springs up and bears fruit to salvation!'

"At ——, during an after-meeting, a young man, an attorney's

clerk, bore the following testimony:—'About a year ago, I was passing along yonder street one Sunday evening; a small bill of invitation was put into my hand; I read, "Des amis anglais et français désirent vous parler de l'amour de *Jésus-Christ*." I thought, I will go in and hear what it is like. I well remember the spot where I sat; just in that corner near the door. I had gone in merely to amuse myself; I remained to listen and to think. I perceived that there had been something very wrong in my heart and life. I have seen myself a lost sinner, and can now trust in Christ as my Saviour. I wish that you all might have the same experience.'

"Two families, in two of the stations, have very recently been brought under the power of the Gospel, and have connected themselves with neighbouring churches.

"Received a very touching letter, written on his sick-bed in the hospital, from an *ouvrier*. He states, 'Before my illness, I had the happiness to frequent your excellent meetings, and there I have found great benefit. I then began to devote my leisure moments to reading the Bible which had lain for twenty years in my house. Above all, since coming here (into the hospital), where I have been for nearly three months, the reading of the New Testament has led me to give myself entirely to God; so that I now find myself truly and extremely happy. Although I suffer from a terrible pulmonary disease, I find a great joy of heart amidst my pain, having received the gift of free salvation by Jesus. Read, if you will, these lines to your co-workers, who love the conversion of precious souls and the advancement of God's kingdom; and use them, if you think well, for the encouragement of those who, like me, have found great difficulty in definitely giving themselves to the Lord.' The writer concludes by expressing the desire that, if restored to health, he might be permitted to utter a few words in one of our meetings in order to bear testimony to a Saviour's grace, and to persuade his compatriots to make trial of it for themselves. We have every reason to believe that

this man, still a sufferer, has indeed 'passed from death unto life.'

"Striking case of a man of middle age, native of the island of *Guadaloupe* (a French colony). He came over as an exhibitor. An enfeeblement of health during the *Exposition* delayed his return to the colony. During this time he became a deeply-interested listener at the *Salle Evangélique* and Rue de Rivoli. On the eve of his departure he told us that he had sought to learn as much as possible of the blessed truth of the Gospel before leaving Paris, in order to make it known to his neighbours in the island on his return.

"A young friend, a missionary student, who devotes himself to the work at —— station, after describing the interest awakened at a weekly prayer meeting recently commenced there, bears the following pleasing testimony:—'I cannot tell you how much personal benefit I derive from this work; I cannot sufficiently express what a privilege it is for me. When I shall go forth to my missionary career, the —— [name of the station] will take a first place among the motives which have urged me forward to labour for the advancement of the kingdom of God.'

"One of the pastors when visiting a great hospital, heard a patient, whom he did not know, calling him to his bedside. The suffering man stretched his hands towards him and said, 'Oh, sir, I know you; I have heard you speak in the Faubourg St. Antoine room, and now that I lie here, I find all my help and all my comfort in trying to recollect what I used to hear in those blessed meetings.'

"Our indefatigable visitor, Madame ——, records about 850 domiciliary visits during the year. The following extracts are translated from her report:—'Many of the people have asked me, with earnestness, what they must do to be saved; and a considerable number, who, at first, came to the meetings merely to pass an hour, have become seriously impressed, and ask me for a place of worship for the Sunday forenoon. In this respect,

great progress has been made this year, and I take it as a proof that they are at least seeking the truth. I observe a great change, also, respecting the insight of spiritual things on the part of those who have long attended; they are far more enlightened than formerly. An aged woman, whom I visited on her death-bed, said to me, "How happy I am that I was ever led to Boulevard Ornano; otherwise I should not have known my Saviour. I thank with all my heart those dear gentlemen who speak of Jesus, and the book you have given me—the New Testament—is the best I have ever read. Now I am too feeble to read it; but I say to Jesus, 'Abide with me; leave me never more,' and then all is peace." She died in this frame of mind. Another aged woman said, "How much I thank you for the meetings! I used to count upon being saved by my virtues, but now I know that I am saved gratuitously. Oh! how I love my Saviour, who has done so much for me." She has lately undergone a painful operation for her sight; all the while she was full of joy. To another of our hearers, who tries to tell her husband (who is unable to leave the house) what she hears in the meetings, I put the question, "Do you understand how it is that a sinner can be reconciled with God?" She replied that she believed that the death of Jesus had done everything. I asked if she believed herself to be pardoned; "Yes," she answered, "I believe what the Bible says, and surely I must be pardoned, for I feel myself delivered from a heavy burden." A man and his wife, who have been plunged into great temporal distress during the year, say that what they have heard in the meetings gives them strength to bear up amidst all their suffering. Another of our people, formerly pious in her way, seeking to work out her own righteousness, says, "All that I have tried to do could not save me. Now I know what is needful; it is that I accept by faith the GIFT of God, eternal life in Jesus; but I see clearly that, for this, I need the aid of the Holy Spirit." A mother told me that she had been alienated from her son, and would not see him, but that

now she was happy to have been enabled to pardon him, through what she had heard in the meetings. "For," added she, "I also have need of pardon."' Our friend adds the record of six or seven other equally interesting cases, which want of space obliges us to omit.

"Miss N—— reports the case of one of our regular hearers of Les Ternes station, of whose joy and surprise on first hearing the Gospel there mention was made in our report of 1876. 'Wife,' he then said on going home, 'I have found such a religion as I had no idea existed; it is so good, so good! You must come also.' During a long and painful illness, he often said that his only remaining desire was to be allowed once more to revisit the '*chères réunions.*' 'When no longer able to speak,' adds Miss N., 'he kept pointing heavenwards as our next meeting-place.' She mentions also one of the Sunday scholars who had died in peace, desiring that her favourite hymn might be sung over her grave."

The following additional page of incidents is given by Mr. Dodds:—

"Met at the Salle Evangélique a liberated communist, who had learned to read during his imprisonment, being taught by a well-known *savant*, a freethinker. By this means the man had been enabled now to read the Bible.

"Have been much interested in an intelligent *ouvrier* at M——. He reads attentively his Bible, and a new light seems breaking into his soul. In a recent letter, he says,—'I have read much in the gospels, and see clearly that only there is to be found the truth and the religion which speaks to us of the mercy of our Saviour.'

"At the —— station I meet often a whole family, the father decorated with medals for saving lives from drowning, who eagerly listen to the addresses, and converse at the end on what they have heard. They sometimes gather their neigh-

bours together to sing the hymns. We have reason to believe that the mother is a decided Christian.

"Miss —— told me of a girl who found one of the small papers of invitation to the Rue de Rivoli *réunion* crumpled up at the bottom of a waste-basket. This brought her to the meeting, and finally to Christ. I knew her, and can add my testimony to this. She is now in a Préfet's family in the south of France, who sent a message to Dr. Fisch saying that he would be glad if a meeting were opened in his village."

One extract more from the report will suffice :—

"Mr. Dodds adds most interesting particulars respecting the *ouvrier*, an extract from whose letter, written in the hospital, appears on a previous page. He states that, when a very young man, seeing a Bible in the hands of a friend, he saved up money enough to buy one, which he read eagerly, and with conviction of its truth. Coming to Paris, where he was required to work all the Sunday, he became quite neglectful, and for nearly twenty years God's Book remained unopened. He thus writes respecting his own history :—'Though I suffer much, I am far happier than when I lived far from God, and was a worldling in good health. It is in these meetings that the Saviour has given me the grace that I needed, to give myself to Him.' Some of his expressions, both in writing, and when friends visit him in the lonely room, which, in all likelihood, he will not leave again, are very striking, especially those evidencing his patience and contentment. For example,—'Sometimes I suffer much, but I have my bed ; my Saviour suffered *on the cross*, but I have my bed.' 'Since I found peace with God by the grace which flows from the Saviour's blood, it seems to me that my bodily sufferings are more easily borne. My Saviour ! to me He is the Pearl of great price and a faithful comforter. How happy should I be to speak to crowds of the love of this Saviour for men !' On the first day of 1879, he writes : 'The

Lord comforts me always, though I suffer much at present. I wish I had health and life now, for I have been too long far away from God, and to-day, when I would work in the Saviour's vineyard, I am unable." He also describes the eagerness of his fellow-patients, when in the hospital, to read the books we had sent to him. His love for the Bible is wonderful.

"Mr. Dodds adds, 'I have been much struck with the number of people at all the meetings who often remain behind to ask counsel and speak of religion and of what they have heard. I have also had several calling on me at my house with whom I have had deeply interesting conversations.'"

Mr. Heriot's report, for the year, of his labours among the young is most interesting. He has left for Scotland; but we are sure he will never forget the useful days spent among the Parisian children. He has sowed seed among them which will spring up when he has gone. He thus writes:—

"Many hundreds of New Testaments have been gained by the children as rewards, as also a still larger number of illustrated tracts and periodicals. There is a systematic way for them to gain these; by this means a large number of gospel publications, above all, the Scriptures themselves, find their way into the surrounding houses, and into the hands of many who might otherwise never have an opportunity of becoming acquainted with the truth.

"Many interesting incidents might be mentioned. We shall briefly mention a few. Miss Matheson, who, with Miss Coldstream, has continued her much appreciated and fruitful labours here, writes: 'A little girl, who attends regularly the children's meeting at Batignolles, has given clear testimony to having understood and accepted the gospel invitation. Her mother, formerly a Roman Catholic, was also much impressed

at the meetings, became an earnest inquirer, and during summer openly professed her faith in Christ. She now partakes of the communion at the Chapelle, Rue Royale, where she and Angèle are never wanting on Sunday morning. Recently they went to pay a visit to the grandmother who lives at some distance. Before leaving Paris, they came to ask us to point out some suitable passages of the Bible to read to the aged woman, as they must take her the gospel message. They had a good deal of opposition to bear, but it has failed to shake their simple faith in the Saviour.'

"'A Protestant girl, who had been seeking peace for long, was brought to the meeting for young women at the Faubourg St. Antoine ; as she herself says, "It was my friend who told me of your meeting, but it was God who led me there." That very night she got the message of peace, and went away rejoicing in Christ. In letters written during summer, and in her own frank way, she has given bright testimony to the reality of her profession. She is now preparing to pass her examinations in order to become a teacher.'

"'A boy of seven, who had come several times to the meetings, said one day to his mother, "Mother, I have got a pain ; I think it must be my sins, but when they are forgiven I think I shall be better."'

"Our excellent and most efficient coadjutor, M. Hannemann, went to England in spring, for the purpose of study and further preparation for the work in which he is engaged, and in which his efforts have been crowned with so much success. While away, he received many letters from his juvenile friends in Paris. A little boy wrote to tell that he had 'built his faith upon the Rock of Ages ;' and a little girl, in another communication, said that her mother and she had both come to the Saviour. After his return from England, a little boy running across the street to embrace him, confided in a whisper, 'Monsieur, je vous aime !' To children and babes, the Bible tells us, many things are revealed which the wise

and prudent know not; such is ofttimes the encouraging experience of those who work among the young.

"There is one nice-looking lad of seventeen who has made himself useful to us in many ways; he sees that the hall is opened and heated in good time, helps to keep order; and he may often be seen collecting a little group round him at the end of a children's service to teach them a verse. He is, in fact, a great ally of ours, and claims the proud position of doorkeeper and keeper-in-order-in-general of the meeting we personally preside at, on Sunday evenings; accompanying us home afterwards, and enlivening us with a full and particular account of himself and his doings during the walk. We shall narrate one of his adventures, which shows how anxious he is to do good, and which is interesting in itself. A poor and ignorant old woman attended the meeting at the station in question. Although she had often heard the story of the cross, she had never taken it clearly in. Our young friend made acquaintance with her. She fell ill, and he visited her. He is a veteran visitor of old women,—they are always pleased to see him, and, besides, they are good listeners. This poor old woman, knowing that our young man came from the '*Salle de Conférences*,' seized the opportunity, and began to confess to him in the Catholic manner. He told her that she ought to confess her sins to God alone, and showed it her from his Testament. He further told her that she ought to read the New Testament, and lent her one. It was a great and new light to her to know that she might confess to Christ,—to be assured that He would hear; and hearing, forgive. Our young missionary often came and read to her, and his visits were valued. It became evident that she was dying; she had now finished the New Testament, and was thirsting to read the Bible, but she was poor and had no money, and he had very little. He made a bargain, however, with our good Bible-woman, and procured a large print five-franc Bible at half-price, this he presented to her; before she had time to read it through, however, she departed this

life. There is every reason to believe that she knew on whom to build her hopes of heaven, as she had learned, in such an interesting manner, to whom to confess her sins."

These are busy days in Paris; and busy nights no less; busy Sabbaths and busy week-days. And yet the work is totally unlike what we find anywhere else in times of religious awakening. No vast crowds in some great church or hall. No orator, like Père Hyacinthe, appealing to popular fervour, or leaning for success on the multitudes that hang around him. No "city in an uproar;" no grand watchword to rally round; no great name to overawe opposition; no ambitious or self-seeking enthusiasm; none of these! Humble labourers, not seeking their own, but the things that are Christ's; hard-working, painstaking, persevering volunteers, with no object but that of winning souls and regenerating Paris; obscure and quiet seed-sowers, not hunting for applause or honour! No monks or nuns with flaunting dresses, moving through the great thoroughfares to proclaim themselves and their good deeds; but modest strangers, wishing to be unnoticed; carrying the Word of life on loving lips or with gentle hands into the alleys of Les Ternes or the dens of Chiffonville. No show, no procession, no banquet, no *fête* beyond that of a tea-party or Christmas gathering. No confessional, nor denun-

ciation from the altar, nor compulsion, nor threat, nor bribery!

The tranquillity of the work is that which so attracts and wins. It is no storm that has broken upon Paris; it is the dew that has fallen everywhere; so bright, yet so silent. It is no fire that is raging in her streets; it is a heavenly fragrance that is filling her atmosphere; and men are at a loss to know whence or how it has come.

> "So when a ship, well freighted with the stores
> The sun matures on India's spicy shores,
> Has dropp'd her anchor, and her canvas furled,
> In some safe haven of our Western world,
> 'Twere vain inquiry to what port she went;
> The gale informs us, laden with the scent."

One remarkable feature in the work is that, though it is carried on against both atheism and Popery, it has stirred no controversy, and is conducted without debate, either in private or on the platform. There has been hardly any "contradicting and blaspheming," such as befell Paul at Antioch: nor even any "daily disputing," as at Ephesus, "in the school of one Tyrannus." The clash of swords has not been heard, nor even the sound of axes or hammers. Round the whole circle of the city the Word has gone, making itself everywhere felt by its own innate vitality. For upwards of seven years

the Gospel has been preached to tens of thousands; it has entered streets, lanes, houses, hearts; it has planted itself side by side with the cathedral, the church, the theatre, the ball-room, the *café*, the restaurant, the gambling-house, the billiard-room, and places lower than these; yet no anger has been exhibited, no strife has been roused, except of a mere temporary kind. The messenger goes upon his way, and "the faithful saying" attracts nightly crowds; yet all is peace. Perhaps the work has not yet reached the stage of success which produces exasperation; perhaps the adversary has not yet found a leader; perhaps absorption in pleasure and contempt for religious men makes the mass of Parisians indifferent to any such pious efforts, for "the earth helps the woman" (Rev. xii. 16); perhaps by Mr. M'All's wise and happy management human passion has been kept out of the movement; perhaps the great truth of God's free love to the sinner has come with a quieting surprise, a soothing influence to a people living upon excitement, and hitherto appreciating only the piquant, the startling, and the stormy; perhaps the truth has really penetrated far beyond those who have actually come forward to own its sway, and unconsciously leavened large sections of a population who, in other circumstances, would have been the first to rise against the aggres-

sion; perhaps the anti-clerical feeling of the people has disposed them to side with anything that they know the clergy would dislike; perhaps the priesthood has been so completely muzzled, if not tamed, that they are unable to do anything but hate or revile; perhaps there are some of these priests secretly alive to the impotencies, if not the errors, of their own system, and in their hearts persuaded that this new Gospel is the last remedy for used-up Paris, if not, indeed, the very Gospel for themselves; perhaps, too, even the fierce democracy feels that here, in this strange Gospel of love and liberty, of Divine and human fellowship, the meeting of earth and heaven, they find the truest and highest communism,—all that is really good in their philosophy of freedom and fraternity, and embodying in its own simplicity the means of producing, without violence, an equality and community, far beyond and far above all that they had ever dreamed of; perhaps the absence of pomp and greatness, the homely halls, the humble men, the soothing hymns, the cheerful music, all contrasting with the gorgeous theatricals of clericalism, have predisposed the multitude to listen and believe; perhaps now the prayers of two centuries of glorious martyrdom are beginning to be heard, and the arm of the Lord is stretched out, on the one hand, to draw souls out of darkness, and

on the other, to bridle the enemy, and give the Gospel not only a free but a peaceful course: for thus speaks the prophet, "I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree. . . . Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads" (Rev. vii. 1, 3).

How far all these things are working together to help the present Mission, I do not undertake to say. I cannot measure the influence of each, nor the combined strength of all. But they are well worthy of notice and of careful study, as connected not only with the religious, but the political history of France.

For France has hitherto in all her movements used the power of the multitude, both in their antipathies and sympathies. It was of the mob that the first emperor was the idol; it was of the same mob that the last Bourbon was the abhorrence. It was the people of France that rose against the Reformation, and shed the blood of saints in their wild fury. In other countries, especially Bohemia, Italy, Spain, and Britain, it was the prince and the priest that drew the dagger and kindled the fire; the common people pitied and were silent. In France

it was as much the multitude that, blind with brutal hatred of they knew not what, rushed on, at the instigation of "the Church," to the slaughter of the flock of Christ.

At present the people listen well-pleased to preachers whom, three hundred years ago, their forefathers would have butchered. There is something most notable in the change. Formerly it was the Gospel that was bound; now it is the priesthood; the Gospel is free, and the evangelist is welcomed.

SECTION IV.

Lyons.

When Mr. M'All planted his first station in Belleville, in 1872, he little thought "whereunto this would grow."

That it should widen and overspread Paris was not likely; at least for many a day. That it should go beyond Paris and penetrate the provinces was still less likely. At least there was no prospect of such enlargements. That these extensions should be invited by the inhabitants themselves, and that calls for help should come from districts, both in and out of Paris, where no efforts had previously been put forth, and no preparations made:—these were things not calculated upon in a land where truth had been trodden down so long and so terribly.

These, however, are just the unlikelihoods that the Paris Mission has to record.

"I sent you to reap that whereon ye bestowed no labour," is often enough found true; but "other men laboured, and ye are entered into their labours" is not always exemplified, or, at least, is not always traceable. Yet, possibly, this may be a far more invariable and constant law of the kingdom than we think. History may not be able to tell us of the previous labourers; but they may have been in the field, and done their work, unknown to any but the great Sower Himself.

At any rate, it would be hasty to say of France that there had been no previous sowing, or no preparation of soil, because we have not been able to discover these. "One soweth and another reapeth" is one of the Divine principles which we find always operating directly or indirectly; showing itself unexpectedly in all ages; leading those who believe it into researches out of the common beat to find out the real ancestry of great movements; and often rewarding these believing searchers with rare discoveries. And, of such surprises, all history, but especially church history, is full.

To inquire into the verification of this law in France is not my object; but I do not doubt that the careful researches of a sympathetic church historian

would bring many things to light in illustration of the Divine purpose and procedure, in connection with that simple proverb, quoted above, to which the Master has so explicitly set His seal. Possibly the history of Lyons, even more than that of Paris, would be found to exhibit the truth and constancy of this peculiar law; and I would now devote a few pages to Mr. M'All's work in that city; a work which, as yet, is only in its infancy. It was begun in October, 1878, and is still vigorously carried on.

Lyons, from the early centuries of the Christian Church, has been pre-eminently a city of martyrs. But never did persecution rage so terribly as towards the close of the sixteenth century, at the time of the St. Bartholomew massacre. The cruelties of paganism were quite overshadowed by the savage brutalities of Popery. The priesthood and the instruments of its blind and bloody rage seemed to be devils, not men. The woes of Lyons have never been written; nor, indeed, can be; so complete was the havoc which swept away its best and bravest and holiest in the great year of blood. In 1572 the streets of Lyons ran red with Huguenot blood, shed by the orders of the king. The Rhone was empurpled; its course was obstructed by corpses; the fish died; and the stench was abominable. At the lowest estimate, 1300 were butchered, men, women, and children,

in that one city, among whom was the musician Guadimel, the composer of the tunes to the psalms of Marôt and Beza. Three hundred had been carried to the archbishop's palace, under the pretence of protection, and there they were murdered. "The heretics, writes their murderer Mandelot, were taken calmly and quietly, one by one, like so many cattle; it was a wonderful spectacle to see the greater part of them, lying with their throats cut in the piazza, naked as the beasts; in less than two days not a soul remained alive, not a single individual could save himself."*

Since then there has been always a remnant of true Christians in the city; but it has been small. Faith has all but died out; and the town is divided between atheism and ultramontanism: the former predominating and manifesting itself in revolution and violence.

To this city Mr. M'All was invited about a year ago; and at last, towards the end of autumn, he went to organise a similar work to that in Paris. In the course of a few weeks he succeeded in starting four stations. Returning to Paris, he was followed by Mr. Dodds for two months; on whose return to the metropolis, Mr. Horace Noel took up the work; the French pastors heartily co-operating.

* Smedley's "Reformed Religion in France," vol. ii., p. 33.

Mr. M'All's narrative of this undertaking is brief; too brief. We wish it had been more minute :—

"Our long-cherished project of founding a work like that of Paris in Lyons, with its 350,000 inhabitants, is at length realised. Occasional expressions of desire that we should make the attempt had reached us from Christians in Lyons itself, and more recently, the Committee of the Evangelical Continental Society has encouraged us by the offer of a handsome grant towards preliminary expenses.

"Believing that the right moment had arrived, three of our number set forth on this interesting errand in the beginning of November. Our excellent coadjutor, M. Rouilly, preceded us as pioneer. It is well known that in Lyons, often styled the Rome of France, ultramontane intolerance reigns side by side with scepticism and atheism in all their dark forms. In spite of difficulties thence arising, we were enabled within a few days to open three stations, and a fourth has since been added. The four rooms contain over 600 sittings. They are in the midst of densely-peopled working-class districts—La Guillotière, La Croix Rousse, Les Brotteaux, and Vaise.

"Through the intervention of the British Vice-Consul and the Prefect of the Rhone, the needful authorisation was at once accorded by the Minister of the Interior. The first meeting was held on Sunday evening, Nov. 17, at La Guillotière, a quarter possessing an unenviable celebrity for revolutionary lawlessness. It was an hour not to be forgotten. With what feelings of mingled thankfulness and responsibility did we see the people gather round us in that humble room! A deputation from the Lyons Young Men's Christian Association aided us much at the door, in singing, &c. The presence of Him whose message of love we had come to announce was felt among us. At the close, many warmly expressed their gratitude for our having come to them. One *ouvrier*, in particular, said, with tears, 'Never in my life have I heard the truth

thus explained ; my conscience answers to it ; this is what I want.'

"The excellent *pasteurs* of Lyons surrounded us, and spoke to the people with great earnestness and power. M. Ruben Saillens, our former helper (now of Marseilles), also aided us in these opening services. The affectionate welcome accorded to us alike by pastors and laymen was deeply touching, and they are prepared to render constant assistance in carrying out the meetings. It will, however, be necessary to secure the residence of a permanent director for the branch mission. We have addressed a pressing appeal, seconded by our Lyons friends, to a gentleman in Switzerland, eminently qualified for the position, and we trust that ere this report issues from the press, his consent will be obtained. Meanwhile, our valued friend, the Rev. R. S. Ashton, and our colleague, the Rev. G. T. Dodds, have rendered essential service in taking temporarily the management. Our faithful coadjutor, the Rev. Horace Noel, is prepared to succeed Mr. Dodds for a time. Most probably the director will need the stated aid of at least one young evangelist, as those on the spot who can give their help are not numerous. The sustentation of this assistant, with the rental and maintenance of so many new mission-rooms, &c. &c., will require largely-increased contributions.

"The meetings at Lyons have, thus far, been very fully attended, and various significant incidents have occurred. At La Guillotière, an *ouvrier*, stoker of a furnace, who had come, at first, with black face, appeared afterwards clean and in his best clothes. He said, 'It is now my delight, while watching my furnace, to think over what I have heard in the meetings.' One of the policemen in attendance to keep order in the street, said, 'I much prefer to be placed here rather than at the door of the theatre : here, all is quietness and order, there, all is noise and folly. I can hear enough from outside to know that what you speak is the true religion ; I must bring my old woman [meaning his wife] that she may hear it too.' On other

occasions, the policemen have recommended the bystanders to enter, explaining the meaning of '*morale*' and '*l'amour de Jésus-Christ*,' on our little papers of invitation."

A little further on in the same report, Mr. Dodds gives some incidents of the work which took place under his own eye:—

"The following is a literal translation of the exact words spoken by a stoker (or furnace-blower), on occasion of the first meeting at Lyons:—'I knew always that there is something here [laying his hand on his heart] which cannot die, but never before had this been so well explained to me; I shall think of it during the week, and that will help me to heat my furnace.' He came the next meeting-night with clean face, and is a regular and most interested attendant.

"A man on his way to a newly-opened theatre close by stepped into our room at ——. He remained the whole time. This occurs frequently.

"At the door of ——, a man said, 'Ah, if what we have heard this evening were believed and practised, there would be peace and happiness here.'

"The policeman at the door at ——, reported that there was already a marked improvement in the quarter; the people, he said, were quieter.

"At ——, a freethinker has come since the opening. He used to say that his philosophy was quite sufficient for him; now he confesses that something more is needed, has begun to read the Bible and also to attend a place of worship.

"Another young man, previously almost entirely ignorant of the Bible, has been led to the Young Men's Christian Association, and is seeking to possess a complete copy of the Scriptures.

"One of the hearers at —— speaks of the great light which has entered into her soul. Here are her words,—'How happy one is when possessing the Saviour Jesus Christ.'"

Of the Lyons work M. St. Hilaire thus writes his impressions to Mr. M'All; and the statements of the venerable and illustrious Professor are of great importance as conveying a Frenchman's impressions of the value of the work in a city which he knows so well:—

"Respecting your enterprise at Lyons, yet in its infancy, your report also tells us something, perhaps rather too briefly, and I would congratulate you on having added to your Paris work this new field of effort. For years it was my habitude to spend my vacations at Lyons, and it was in the dear *Chapelle Evangélique* in the *Rue Lanterne*, and by means of its then pastor, Mr. Fisch, that I was led to the Gospel. I am entitled, then, to call the good town of Lyons my spiritual native country. One thing I can say to you with certitude,—that nowhere could there be found a race more receptive, more religiously susceptible than the people of the Lyonnais. Too long held down under the ultramontane yoke, this yoke commences to gall them; but at Lyons, as throughout the entire Catholic world, there is only one door by which to emerge from it, that of infidelity. You, dear brother, have indicated to them another, and I thank you for it in the name of all the Christians of Lyons, who will rejoice to aid you in your work.

"And now, dear and respected brother, let me express to you my joy to see extending to some of our largest cities, first to Lyons, to Marseille, Bordeaux, &c., the blessings of this work of regeneration by the Gospel, restricted hitherto to our capital. As for politics, arts, literature, luxury, pleasure, Paris has become the focus of them all; but the Gospel has its citizen-rights everywhere, for it belongs to no country exclusively, or, if it has one, it is heaven! For whom has it been given above all?—for the poor, the obscure, the disinherited of the earth. Among them it was that Jesus commenced His mission. He spoke their language in those ravishing parables

which the people instinctively understands not so much by the intellect as by the heart. May, then, the Angel of the Apocalypse, 'carrying in His hands the everlasting Gospel,' pass, at length, throughout our beloved France, visiting not the cities only, but our humblest hamlets!"

A few extracts from private letters will not be unacceptable. Perhaps, though brief, they may prove even more interesting than the published report. One Christian friend, writing to another regarding a matter in which the hearts of both are warmly engaged, notes down little things which would otherwise be forgotten, and gives views of the work which he might not think of giving in a report.

Mr. M'All thus gives his own first impressions of the new enterprise, in a letter dated Lyons, 15th November, 1878:—

"Knowing your warm interest in our enterprise in Lyons, I am anxious to let you know something of our first steps towards obtaining centres of meeting in this great city. You can well understand that the first steps in such a case are very arduous; and we have had many journeyings to and fro in rain and mist and mud, seeking localities in the various working-class quarters. You are aware that Lyons is often styled the 'Rome' of France, and that, while infidelity has a widespread hold upon a large part of the population, intolerance reigns supreme with the residue, including a very large majority of the wealthy and influential. Hence localities in the central parts of the town were, in general, refused to us; but we have found a different disposition in the faubourgs, and there have been willingly received as tenants. We have

now four populous localities among the *ouvriers* in view,—La Guillotière, Les Brotteaux, La Croix Rousse, and Vaise. Pray that blessing may attend the planting of Christ's standard in the heart of these teeming populations. To-day the authorisation has reached us from the Ministère de l'Intérieur at Paris. We are most kindly and warmly welcomed by the pastors and evangelical Christians here, as well as by the Young Men's Christian Society, who gave us a little soiree this week, and, with one accord, promised their hearty co-operation. The popish bigotry here is beyond expression. Many of the landlords, themselves indifferent to all religion, dare not let their places to us for fear of their neighbours ; and large employers are, we learn, forbidding their workmen to enter a Protestant place of worship. We must be careful to avoid controversy, and go to the people with the pure and direct utterances of the life-giving Gospel."

Mr. Dodds, who succeeded Mr. M'All at these stations, and carried on the work for two months, thus writes from Lyons in December, 1878 :—

"Already there are signs of life here ; and some have been deeply touched in the meetings. At one, a furnace-blower turned up with a very black face ; next night he came washed and clean, and said to one of the speakers, 'This is the truth ; I feel something here [touching his heart] which tells me so ; and all the day, as I blow my furnace, and poke the fire, I am thinking of these things.' It was a strange feeling that I experienced on Sunday evening at Vaise, when I spoke to the people. I felt that the well-known words, 'Come unto me, all ye that labour,' and 'God so loved the world,' &c., were being heard for the first time by many, if not by all. How fresh were these words, how real and deep ; and how truly I felt that they were spoken for *man*. We have crowded meetings, and attentive listeners."

And again in 3rd January, 1879 :—

"It has been a keen pleasure to me here to break up the ground ; perhaps even more so than at Paris, the work has been distinctively one of evangelisation. The people seem extremely ignorant, and the Gospel is new altogether to them. When St. Paul's words are thought to be Plato's, and the ordinary meanings of Bible words are not even imagined, one could hardly have a field more unprepared, except that that in itself is a preparation. I was at Vaise last night. The meeting was crowded, people pressing as close to me at the desk as was possible or quite conducive to bodily comfort. I have had a good deal of trouble there in the earlier meetings, there have been noise and shouting, and occasionally the necessity to expel some young men. Two *gardiens* are stationed at the door. Last night there was no noise, but most earnest attention, while M. L—— spoke on Paul's *New-Year's wish* for them : 'My heart's desire is that you may be saved.' He might have gone on much longer as far as attention was concerned ; but I like to have plenty of singing ; and we had 'Tell me the old, old Story' and 'Look and Live' and 'Safe in the arms of Jesus.' They are fond of the hymns, and join with all their heart, though there is sometimes more sound than melody. Afterwards I spoke to them of Paul's conversion, dwelling on the difference between a sinner unsaved and a sinner pardoned. I read to them from 2 Cor. xi., the list of Paul's sufferings, to show them what a change there was in that man, and what he had willingly endured for Christ's sake, and to convert men to God. We have had much encouragement at Vaise. A man with visage black as coal kindly collects the hymn-books for me at the end. He appears to be deeply interested. A woman comes steadily, who listens with tears in her eyes. She is in the employ of some Jesuits, and persists in coming in spite of their efforts to prevent her. The other evening she said, 'Oh ! how happy one is when possessing the Saviour !' Now, there

are oftener smiles than tears on her face. The policemen at the door tell me that there is quite a change already in the quarter. Some might doubt the truth of this, in so short a time, but they spoke from what they had experienced. They would do anything to help us, and are glad to come into the room and listen when they can.

"At the *réunion* of Les Brotteaux we have more mixture of classes, people of better position attending. The room holds 165, and is sometimes inconveniently filled. M. P—— tells me of an infidel who used to boast that his philosophy was enough for him, a very intelligent man; he began to come at the opening, and is never absent. He asked M. P—— to marry him, accepted a Bible with thankfulness, and now not only brings his wife, but often several friends with him. I trust his heart is touched, and that he may be yet made a Christian helper at Lyons, for we need such greatly. He tells me also of a young man who never went to church, and had a habit of swearing whenever he opened his lips. Now he never misses an evening, and, strange to say, his sister tells M. P—— that he has completely given up his bad habit. By attending at this meeting, a young Roman Catholic has been led to come to the Young Men's Christian Association. There are some fine young men in that union; they are distributed among our meetings, to stand at the door and be otherwise helpful. . . .

"I want you to engage praying friends at home in special prayer for the pastors and teachers of France."

The work now going on in Lyons will lead many back to the earlier days of the Church in that city. The history of the Christian Church in Lyons remains yet to be written, and would form one of the most romantic narratives,—one of the most wonderful "monographs" that could be written.

We do not know any other city in the world which furnishes such successions of the rise and fall,—yet the fall and rise also,—of Christian truth and life,—such a story of martyrdom from the second century to the present day.* And before closing the present sketch of the present work, we make the following extract from a little-known work entitled "The Progress of the Reformation on the Continent," and published some forty-two years ago by the Rev. J. Hartley, British Chaplain at Geneva and Tours. The story ought not to be forgotten in connection with Lyons, and with the beloved Adolphe Monod :—

"I have myself visited no Church in France, on which so evident a blessing appeared to rest, as that of Mons. Adolphe Monod at Lyons. This zealous minister of Christ had been excluded from the National Protestant Church of that city, in consequence of the Arian and worldly principles which had infected it; but, as is so frequently the case, persecution promoted rather than retarded the progress of the Gospel. Mons. Monod opened a second Protestant Church at Lyons, and when I visited it in 1834, I found the place of public assembly crowded to excess, and one hundred and ten persons, all of them consist-

* Several of the provincial towns in France have memories like those of Lyons, though not so old; Tours and Amboise, for instance. At the latter of these places, shortly before the Bartholomew massacre, 1200 Protestants were put to death,—either hanged or flung into the Loire. The terrace is still pointed out where the king, with the Guises and *Mary Queen of Scots*, gazed with delight upon the butchery of 1200 Protestants.

ent Christian communicants. One-half of the latter were converts from the Church of Rome.

"As instances of individual conversion are always interesting, and tend to afford a better idea of the state of religion in any country, I shall conclude this chapter by a narrative of the kind, related to me by the very person to whom it occurred. He is a gentleman of considerable influence in one of the departments of France, being connected by marriage with the family of one of Napoleon's Field Marshals, and having been member of the Chamber of Deputies.

"Travelling in the Vosges Mountains, he lost his way. He descended from his carriage, and entered into a house to make inquiries. How little do we know, what important, what eternal consequence may follow, from events which appear to us altogether accidental and trifling! The house which Mons. —— had entered was the dwelling of the pastor who had succeeded Oberlin at the Ban de la Roche; and he appears to be one who has inherited not merely the office, but also the piety of his revered predecessor. This good man, with all the zeal and earnestness which has distinguished so many of our French brethren, instantly addressed Mons. —— on the high interests of eternity, charging him most faithfully to give them his serious and immediate attention. Mons. —— was thunderstruck; never in his life had he met with such an occurrence. Born and educated amidst the fury of the French Revolution, religion had been a subject of all others most unthought of by him, most unknown, most neglected. Such however was the impression produced by the worthy pastor's exhortation, that no sooner had he returned to his home than he instantly sent to procure a copy of the Scriptures in the town adjacent to his residence. Failing to procure one here, he sent to Paris and obtained one from thence. Now he commenced to study the sacred volume with diligence. He called on the Protestant pastor who was nearest to him. But here, alas! was one of the rationalist school, who advised him not

to think of quitting the Church of Rome, and who gave him to understand that evangelical doctrines were nothing but Methodism and folly! Mons. ——, however, was too deeply affected by the realities of the eternal future, to be checked by such awful delusion in his search of immortality. He called shortly afterwards at Lyons on Mons. Monod, and by the Divine blessing on their intercourse soon became enlightened on the great doctrines of the Gospel, and is now, with his Lady, a bold and zealous follower of Jesus Christ, devoting his time, his influence, and all his powers to the cause and glory of that Saviour who has revealed to him so graciously His Divine power and mercy!"

Thus both the past and present of France are full of a spiritual interest, of which few in our day are aware. There is "no dearth nor barren land" in its history, were it searched into and read aright. Dr. Merle D'Aubigné has done not a little in this romantic field. But much more remains to be done. The religious annals of that land must be written for the benefit of Europe. "Eldest daughter" of Rome she has been; and, "like mother like daughter," may be said of her; "she-wolf of France," as the old poet calls her, twin-sister to the ravening wolf of Rome, she has drunk the blood of saints without number. But never, like Asia Minor or like Africa, or even like Spain, has she been left without a remnant in her hills and valleys. The priesthood of the Pope ravaged the fold of Christ, but, age after age, among her people,

flocks were gathered, and fed in deserts and valleys, in dens and caves of the earth.

Christians have taken their idea of France from the Revolution of the last century. They have forgotten, or have never read, all that went before; and they have looked upon that era of human rage as stamping her national character and sealing her doom. They forget that, revolting as the deeds were, the priesthood had well earned their share of awful retribution; and they forget also that in the mysterious providence of God, that atheistic outburst arrested the persecutions against Protestants, and put an end to the horrid cruelties perpetrated by Roman murderers,—to whom the rack, the wheel, the dungeon, the rope, the sword, were the daily instruments for the conversion of heretics. Those who have read Bungener's agonising but stirring story of these times, called "The Jesuits in France," will understand what we mean. The atheists of France cried shame upon the deeds of the priesthood, and protested against the torture of Protestants. The unbelieving philosopher had more of humanity than the priest or the bishop.

Good men also forget that God has always had a people in that land; and that, in studying its annals, even in its worst days, we are sure to light upon, here and there, some remnants of faith, however small and

feeble. A German pastor, some forty years ago, after darkly picturing the condition of his country, —its irreligion, unbelief, and blasphemy,—yet adds, that here and there he had come upon bright specimens of faith where he least expected it, summing up with this beautiful illustration: "When I walk through my parish I seem to pass through the shaft of a rich mine, where a stroke of the mattock on the right or left may every moment discover to me a new vein of precious metal."

Perhaps, in reference to the present condition of France, this quotation may convey an exaggerated picture. But as to the past, I think it does not. The more the old annals are searched, the more will the truth of it be confirmed; and I am not unwilling to believe that even in regard to the present century it may to a certain extent be true. The sudden uprise of inquiry everywhere, and the eager thirst for some better religion than has hitherto been given to the nation, indicate the hidden existence of a state of feeling which, if not directly religious, is certainly a groping after faith, and a dissatisfaction with unbelief and superstition. It is something for evangelists to work upon; it is something to cheer and stimulate all Christian men in their efforts to send the Bible abroad, and to make known the grace of the cross, not only to the

ouvriers of the cities, but to the peasantry of the provinces.*

At the risk of almost unduly prolonging our Lyons narrative, we feel constrained to give the following interesting and remarkable letter from a Swiss professor; all the more because it contains some peculiar remarks on the English strangers who venture to intrude their barbarous tongue upon a French audience, and specially on the refined *ouvriers* of Lyons, who showed their appreciation of the beauties of their own dialect in rather a noisy way. The scene so graphically described may be a warning to us Northern barbarians not to force ourselves on such an audience, and a hint also to the conductors of these *réunions* not to ask us thus to expose the uncouth ruggedness of our island accents before the civilised world. Our Swiss critic should remember that we are, what we have always been, since the days of Virgil,—

* Both Mr. M'All and Mr. Dodds have returned to their work in Paris, but the Lyons Mission is now efficiently carried on by M. Bernard de Watteville, in association with the Protestant pastors. This gentleman was formerly a banker in Berne, and became a pastor of the Free Church (*Eglise Libre*) of Neuchâtel, having studied under Professor Godet. After six months' residence at Lyons, he has consented to become director of the Lyons branch. He is a man of prayer, and a devoted missionary, having given up good worldly prospects, and, along with his wife, giving himself up to Christian work. He receives no salary from the Mission.

"Penitus toto divisi orbe Britanni."

Civilisation has gone past us, away to the polished South; and we really cannot help our unrounded accents. Our language is doubtless a relic of the Middle Ages. We must not boast of it, yet it has done good service to the world :—

"NEUCHÂTEL, 18*th April*, 1879.

"Having come home from Lyons, where I have just passed a fortnight, I hasten to fulfil my promise, and send you an account of the Mission to the Workmen of Lyons, which Mr. M'All began about four or five months ago, and which he very recently entrusted to our friend M. de Watteville. Ordained as minister of the Holy Gospel in October, 1878, at La Chaux-de-Fonds, M. de Watteville did not hesitate to respond to Mr. M'All's appeal, in which he saw a call from God, and he has occupied his post since the 31st of January.

"Four stations are at present open and already going on with entire success. These are Vaise, La Guillotière, La Croix Rousse, and Les Brotteaux. The quarter of Les Brotteaux is largely inhabited by Protestants, and the people who come to this station, the district being inhabited largely by Protestants, present a more cultivated aspect, and are less strangers to our way of working. The first three stations are situated in districts inhabited by *ouvriers*, more or less famed for insubordination and their degraded life. At La Guillotière it is not safe to walk about after eleven o'clock in the evening, as a pastor of the city said to me. La Croix Rousse is the Belleville of Lyons, the centre of revolution and atheism. It is the 'mountain of work' (montagne du travail), the 'city of the future' (cité de l'avenir), which Michelet opposes in one of his works to the steep and rocky Fourvière, which faces it, and which is indeed the 'citadel of ultramontanism and of the past.' This antithesis well expresses the moral and religious state of the

second town in France. Clericalism and ultramontanism among the privileged classes ; horror of all authority, *social* and *religious*, among the others, and no middle class between these two, if it be not the Protestants, who number about 15,000 souls. The horror which the *ouvriers* of La Croix Rousse have for anything connected with Roman Catholicism is so great, that it would suffice to be suspected of having some connection with the priests to be at once classed among the enemies of the people. I was told the other day that to say *Saint* Peter and *Saint* John, instead of summarily calling them Peter and John, was enough to excite their prejudices. Happily they have learned to call us by the good name of '*Evangéliques*,' by which term they indicate our opposition to the Catholics ; this is the name generally given by them to the Protestants. The population of Lyons is less interesting than that of Paris. Among the higher classes there is abundant pride and disdain, —and that is the case everywhere,—and plenty of ignorance, coarseness of manners, and dirt among the people : the merchants and shopkeepers are well known for their cupidity. Lyons, although two rivers flow through it, passes, rightly or wrongly, for one of the dirtiest towns in France. The advantages of the south are not to be found there, and there are many of its inconveniences. Other customs, and the food they eat, betray their southern origin. You will learn with pleasure that since 1871 the name of Swiss has enjoyed a good reputation. It is enough to be announced as Swiss to the audience of workmen to perceive at once signs of approbation in the assembly.

"By being present at these meetings, I was able to assure myself of the difference which exists between the Lyonnese and Parisians. Those who attend Mr. M'All's meetings at Paris are too often condemned to hear English speakers who address them in their own tongue, or in a French, after their own fashion. It is a weakness of these sons of Albion, so great in other respects, to imagine that everywhere they are indis-

pensable, and that there is something essential wanting if they are absent, or inactive, or silent.

"And so all the English friends who pass through Paris do not fail to claim the *inedioulgence* of the Paris *ouvriers*, in the *réunions*. In their opinion this is not only a duty, but a right. Is it not a fact that they support the work? That, however, which has often struck me is to see the wonderful goodwill with which they endure the *cacophonies* which come from the lips of the strangers. Here and there one may remark a slight smile, but laughter—never. A stranger, they told me, enjoys immunities which are refused to a native. At Lyons the people have some progress to make before they reach this height of culture. One evening an Englishman wished to speak at Vaise, at the same time excusing himself for not being able to speak 'our beautiful French tongue,' 'notre belle langue française.' M. de Watteville was to translate his speech. But hardly had the first accents of that strange and barbaric tongue fallen on the ears of the people, than a loud burst of laughter was the answer received. In vain the president asked for silence, and claimed the observance of the rules of hospitality, for the second sentence was hardly begun, but it met with the same result; and this, although the speaker said that he was going to speak of the Russo-Turkish war. The Englishman had to withdraw his speech, which he did with much good grace and good-humour.

"One would think that after such a scene discipline is rather difficult to enforce in these meetings. I would say, not at all; and, indeed, much progress has been made during the past few weeks. At the beginning of the Mission our friends were followed, when they left the meeting, by a troop of mischievous fellows, who mocked, shouted, or ran after them. I can say that this habit has already completely disappeared. In the hall itself a quiet reproof from the president is sufficient to obtain order, silence, and respect, when, for example, some noisy fellows amuse themselves by disturbing the singing.

M. de Watteville makes it a rule to put no one out of the meeting, except when it is absolutely necessary. There is always a policeman at the entrance, a precaution which was judged to be necessary by the pastors of Lyons when the work began, which, however, is not considered necessary at Paris. It would be a pity to suppress the custom, now that it exists, besides, it is an excellent means of evangelising the police. The other day the *gendarme* on duty came at the end of the meeting to ask a New Testament.

"At the beginning of the Mission the men liked to enter with their hats on, and the policeman thought it his duty to snatch them violently off their heads in the name of public decency. M. de Watteville has put an end to this hard method of keeping order, and now the gentleness of the president, and the heat of the crowded room, as La Fontaine says,

'Does more than violence and anger.'

They have yet to learn, it is true, that they must not take their neighbours' hymn-books, nor snatch from them the tracts that please them. Let us hope, as we now lend them books from a small library, that the temptation to take away what is not their own will be less strong.

"I have been often struck by the attention with which these people, literally gathered in from the great thoroughfares and streets, listen to the addresses, spoken, as you know, without any attempt at eloquence. The rules of oratory are here exactly the same as at Paris: to begin by catching the attention by comparisons, stories, sometimes even by a trifling amusing remark to reach the heart and conscience, taking up no more time than fifteen or twenty minutes. That is all the homiletic of our meetings.

"I have been told that often people are seen to go out during the meeting, to walk thoughtfully on the pavement for a few minutes and then come in again. I have seen some go out and immediately return with a friend. Here and there a good lady

crosses herself: the singing of hymns takes the place of the bell.* As long as the harmonium is quiet, and the people have not begun to sing one of the not very classical but spirited and catching hymns in Mr. M'All's collection, many empty chairs are to be seen, those who are present being occupied in reading tracts, or turning over the pages of *L'Ami de la Maison.* One can see the passers-by standing at the door, not sure if they shall enter; and with our little printed invitation in their hand, others read it as they walk away. But as soon as the singing is heard in the street, crowds enter, and each hymn that is sung draws new listeners. Those who go out have their places immediately filled, so that we have always the pleasure of seeing the hall filled during the second half of the hour.

"The mission-halls are four in number, and were all formerly shops: the smallest hold from 100 to 130 persons, the largest from 200 to 220.

"At Lyons, as at Paris, these meetings are designated by order '*réunions morales;*' and their character answers well to the name. Everything that looks like public worship in a church is avoided: a short prayer closes the meeting, but it would not do thus to commence. Prayer is offered, unseen by men, in the hearts of those who are to speak, and our friends have more than once made proof in their experience of the fact that there is an intimate and necessary correspondence between this act of prayer and the success, greater or less, of the meeting.

"That which is needed, as at Paris, is workers. The pastors of the two churches,—National and Free,—manifest their sympathy for the work without exception, and lend their aid, as far as their duties permit. Several laymen of piety, and well fitted for the work, have given their aid; but all this help is

* "Referring to the bell, which is rung each time the host is elevated during the performance of mass."

not enough for actual needs, and this poverty of helpers renders the extension of the work impossible at present; though this will soon become a moral necessity.

"Our friends cannot do more without impairing their health, and thus all will be lost, for no one has yet appeared, even in the distance, to take their place. Every evening is occupied without exception, and this cannot go on long. Besides, they have established several meetings for children similar to those existing in Paris. M. de Watteville must, therefore, soon have a properly-qualified colleague, and thus be able to found new stations, and find a little time of rest, most necessary for himself and his devoted partner. That which increases the fatigue of those who direct this work, is that after half-past nine in the evenings the omnibuses cease to go, and our friends must return on foot to their home, in all weathers, sometimes a considerable distance, and after an evening's work fatiguing for both.

"The relations of M. de Watteville with the pastors of the city are most cordial. As at Paris, the work is entirely unconnected with any denomination, as it was from the beginning. The time will come, I believe, when it will be necessary to consider what to do with those persons who have been gained to the cause of the Gospel by means of these meetings, and the most simple thing, and most practical, will be to recommend them to go to some evangelical church. There must soon also be, as at Paris, lady visitors, who will find their way into the families, and water the seed sown in the meetings. But all that will come about in time: our friends are decided not to hurry, and will follow the leadings of Providence, rather than go before them.

"I shall be asked, Is there yet any fruit of this Mission? and I answer, Yes. Several persons, we know, have been touched by the words which they have heard. Have there yet been any conversions? I do not know. Let us remember that the work is only beginning. Two facts, however, may be

given as significant. In the neighbourhood of the station of La Croix Rousse, the Free Church has opened a chapel; and since these meetings were established, the audience has tripled itself. While I was at Lyons, M. de Pressensé gave several *conférences* on 'Materialism' in the Free Church, which is seated for from 1200 to 1500 persons. It was filled, they told me, by people who had never been there before, and the members of the church could not find room.

"I have, then, brought away from Lyons an excellent impression of the work just begun; and ever since I have been putting to myself this question, How comes it that the evangelisation of the *ouvriers*, which succeeds so well in two places, so far separated from each other as Paris and Lyons, has so often failed with us? Is it the case that the type of meetings, imagined and created by Mr. M'All, and which has so well succeeded in France, is the only method suitable to be adopted in every other country for the working-classes? Perhaps; but after all, what a charm must be broken, what fatal prejudices must be dissipated, before we can hope to see the Gospel, or even *la morale*, listened to at Neuchâtel by those whom we call the working-classes. I leave this problem to your readers; it has not yet been solved by me.

"Meanwhile, let us be grateful to God for having placed one of the former students of our college, now one of our ordained ministers, over a work which we cannot accomplish here. Let us be thankful also that God has given him the gifts necessary to carry on successfully such an enterprise. I cannot better sum up a most sincere opinion of what I have seen and heard, than by saying, Our friend is fitted for the work, and it suits him well.

"A. GRETILLAT,
"*Professor in the Free Church College of Neuchâtel, and Colleague of Professor Godet.*"

Here I had meant the Lyons narrative to close;

but, after writing the above, I obtained from Mr. Dodds the following letter of M. de Watteville, which brings down the story of the work in that city to the present summer. It is one of no common interest, and is dated "Lyons, 30th May, 1879":—

"You ask me for news of our meetings at Lyons,—our little (*petites*) meetings, as they like to call them here. And first of all, let me say that I feel glad that they are small; every work which is destined to increase should have a small beginning, and ought to be like the grain of mustard-seed, to which Jesus Christ compares the kingdom of God. A little seed cast among the working men of Lyons,—such has been the modest meeting-place opened by Mr. M'All on the 17th of November, 1878, in La Guillotière. It is worth while remarking that this is the first of our mission-halls which we are about to quit, and begin anew not far off. We hope to open this new 'salle' about the end of June. It is larger, better ventilated, lighted with gas, and will not fail to attract the working-classes of the district. The number of regular attendants at this meeting is a proof of the deep interest with which these workmen,—their hands black with coal, their faces bronzed by the heat of the furnaces at which they work,—listen to our evangelistic addresses. Every Sunday morning we gather together a few children, and address them, striving to suit our words to their understanding, chiefly by the use of illustrations. Close to our mission-hall in this quarter, in a miserable garret, is a working woman, poor and alone. Our meetings have opened up new horizons for her. Her husband has forsaken her, and she is obliged to work, gaining her daily bread by means of her needle. In spite of her many trials, this honest and simple heart preserves an exhaustless source of poetry and a charm which is all her own,—which, too, has fitted her to understand and feel the attractive power of the

Gospel. Wishing to let us know what thoughts rose in her heart at the first meeting which she attended, she showed us the letter which she had written to her mother, a poor peasant in Bourgogne, telling her of the happiness which she had found.

"'I must tell you, dear mother,' she wrote, 'that some gentlemen have opened a hall in the Place de la Croix; any one goes there who likes, and there is nothing to pay. They sing such beautiful songs, and speak of Jesus: it is so good to love Jesus; Jesus loves that which is good,—the sun, the birds, the flowers: He loves our happiness. O God! bless my dear mother, and the gentlemen who come and speak to us; you must pardon me for saying "Thou"* to God, but the gentlemen in the meeting pray in this way, and now I cannot do otherwise.'

"Spite of the bad reputation which this quarter possesses, our meetings have never been troubled. It is true that we reach only a small part of the vast Guillotière, where the houses are more scattered than in the centre of the town. It will be necessary to open another 'salle' on the boundaries of Les Brotteaux (the next district), for from our 'salle' in La Guillotière to that in the Avenue de Noailles the distance is nearly a mile and a-half.

"At Les Brotteaux we have to do with a very mixed audience; many a great lady from among the Protestants thinks it no shame to sit side by side with women who must work to gain their daily bread. One of our acquaintances in such a class of society said to us, one day, that she met there the coachmen and 'concierges' of her friends!

"Quite close to our hall is the 'Théâtre des Folies Bergère.' Every evening they light a shining row of transparent and many-coloured shining gas-jets, beside which our more modest light is not an unsuccessful rival. On a dark evening it lights

* "It is the Roman Catholic habit to say 'you.'"

up the words, 'Réunion Morale,' which is the 'sign' of our quiet little 'boutique.'* 'Wisdom crieth without: she uttereth her voice in the streets; she crieth in the chief place of concourse, in the opening of the gates.' Many souls that have gone astray, and are seeking on the broad way of sin to satisfy the cravings of the flesh, have stopped before our door and listened to our appeals for a few moments. Others have only read the text,† 'Jesus says, Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out.' By this means many young men,—clerks and message-boys,—have been attracted by the sound of our hymns. At first they came to laugh and mock; now they have become more serious, and at the end of the meeting on Monday evening, we generally gather them together to practise a few hymns. A choir of about fifteen persons has been formed under our kind organist, Madame Coste, and the hymns, sung in four parts, give a great attractive power to our meetings.

"Testimonies precious and encouraging to us, from attendants who have got good at this meeting are not wanting. One evening, during the past winter, a gentleman of striking appearance, waited patiently till the crowd had withdrawn to speak to me; he said that he had come in 'by chance,' not having the least idea what was going on within, and that he was very glad to have heard the addresses. 'I am a Roman and Apostolical Catholic,' he cried out, 'but I sympathise heartily with your work.' A lady, dressed in mourning, a Catholic, and belonging to a noble family, had continued to attend our meeting for some time, accompanied by her two servants. Her reserved and almost haughty manner kept us at a distance. One evening, however, at the end of a very striking address,

* "The room was formerly a shop."

† "It is a banner-text hung on the wall opposite the door. We are obliged to put 'Jesus says,' as mistakes and misapprehensions as to our objects often occur."

the ice broke, and turning towards us, her eyes filled with tears : 'Thank you,' she said, warmly shaking our hand, 'what a privilege to hear words like these ; this is the first year that I have come to your meetings, but I shall always attend, for they do me good.' Before leaving for the country this lady expressed to us her great regret that she could no longer be present, and her hope to find us there on her return next winter.

"Two young workmen came in one evening as they passed along the street. They were heard to say one to another as they went ont, 'We came in to get warm, but here we have heard something very good ; and then, it is so clear, one understands everything that these men say. We must come back : I like that better than the ball !'

"From my windows, dear Sir, I see rising before me the hill of La Croix Rousse, having on its steep declivities many rows of houses, which one would easily mistake for the walls of a fortress,—but if La Croix Rousse is a fortress, it is so, not in the literal but figurative sense. Fortress of infidelity it is indeed, but also mountain of labour ('montagne de travail'), as the people call it. To the west, on the other side of the Saône, stands Fourvière, with its churches and convents, opposite to the 'mountain of labour,' the fortress of ultramontanism and superstition of the grossest kind. At present they are building on it a memorial cathedral to the Virgin of Fourvière, who kept the attacking German armies at a distance at the time of the war, built of the grandest and most costly materials that can be found. Nowhere, as at Lyons, does one see these two citadels of Satan, superstition and infidelity, so opposed one to the other. But they will not long remain thus, and will meet some day,—are they not sisters ? The people of La Croix Rousse have just passed through a painful crisis, happily of short duration. The strike did not assume the proportions which were expected. But the want of work did not make itself less felt, and there is everywhere trouble and suffering.

"Our 'salle' at La Croix Rousse holds more than two hundred chairs, and our friends tell us that were it double or three times as large it would be as well filled as it is now. How great is the attractive power of the Gospel. What an influence does it exercise to convince, to reprove, and to convert. A man of the worst character, and of a very bad reputation, dared to utter threats against our meeting. Instead of doing what he threatened, he has now become a regular attendant. One of our friends, a pastor, who was seeking one of his parishioners on the fifth floor of a house in La Croix Rousse, entered by mistake a garret, where was lying upon a pallet a poor old man, ill, and in extreme destitution. 'You must feel very lonely,' he said, 'without family and without friends.' 'Oh, I am not alone,' replied the poor workman. 'That is true,' said the pastor; 'for God is with you.' 'Yes,' said the old man, 'God is with me, and also Jesus Christ. I do not belong to any religion. I don't know of anything else but Jesus Christ. When I was well, I used to go always to the meeting in the Rue de Cuire; it is there that I heard about Jesus Christ, and now that I am too ill to attend,—well, I am not alone; Jesus Christ is with me.'

"We leave La Croix Rousse and its factories, whose noisy hum is heard even in the streets, its intelligent, honest, and laborious population, and descending the hill by the 'ficelle,' a railway, the carriages of which are drawn up and let down by a rope, we go to take the 'mouche' (*i.e.*, 'fly') on the quay of the River Saône. The 'mouches' are pretty little boats, which steam up and down between Perrache and Vaise. One day when going to Vaise in one of these boats,—very convenient when it rains, which is often the case at Lyons, whose climate, I am told, is rather like that of your country,—finding myself, I say, one day in the cabin of the 'mouche,' a workman, with a pleasant expression on his face, came up to me and said, 'Monsieur, I have seen you at the meeting.' 'At what meeting, please?' 'Oh, at the meeting in the Rue de

Cuire.' 'Good, and do you go there often?' 'Well, when I have time, I hear there something good, and it costs nothing.' That which strikes these men most of all, accustomed as they are to pay for everything, even to the very chairs in the churches, is to find that there are people in the world who offer them something for nothing. Often here we see persons, who, when entering our rooms for the first time, hesitate before they sit down. Even when we print on our bills of invitation, the words, 'Entry free,' in large letters, they don't believe their eyes. Are there not many people at Lyons and elsewhere,—perhaps even in Scotland,—who do the same, and who cannot believe in the free grace of the love of Jesus Christ? Let us take to heart that word of the Gospel, 'Freely ye have received, freely give.'

"Our little mission-hall at Vaise is bright and well situated, but too small; the atmosphere is stifling; and what is to be done? Change our hall! Yes; but halls are not too abundant in this little 'faubourg.' We must wait for some better occasion. We have at Vaise two audiences, one on Sundays and another on a week-day. On Sunday they are staid people, for the most part fathers and mothers, and some passers-by, quiet, attentive, and sympathetic. On Thursday we are invaded by a band of noisy and rude young men, who give us, as people say, 'du fil à reborder.'* One of our friends unceremoniously calls them 'the Papuans of the mission.' However, though they are a little savage, our young men at Vaise have souls to save as well as others. After all, good-humour, a little brightness, a kind word, do more to soften them than the severity with which one is often tempted to treat them, when they make a disturbance during the addresses, or disturb the singing by sounds without a name. 'Patience and time,' La Fontaine has well said, 'do more than violence and anger.' What is better still is that love, with which the love of Him who came

* Intranslateable. It means, "plenty of work to do."

not to heal the whole but those that are sick ought to inspire us. It would be wrong of us not to recognise that there is already a little improvement in the conduct of these savages, and we do not despair of seeing them some day more civilised and more pious.

"Now we are about to return home, but as the 'mouches' cease to ply from an early hour of the evening, we must go home on foot. The fantastic glimmer of the lights, that burn here and there on the hills that surround our road, accompanies us all the way, and makes us think of those gnomes of the fairy tales who flit about at night with torches to give them light. As for ourselves, we like to repeat this line from one of your English hymns,—

"'Lord, if I may, I'll serve another day.'"

There may be great things in store for Lyons yet, in spite of ultramontane opposition and atheistic contempt. The "martyrs of Lyons and Vienne," among the noblest of the noble army of martyrs, speak from the second century to the nineteenth, and remind us of the great things done there of old. The Gospel then came from the East; now it comes from the North. Some of the seven churches, perhaps Smyrna, whose merchants traded with Lyons, sent the living Word to France in the early centuries; the Christians of England are endeavouring to send it again in these last days; and perhaps there may yet be granted to Lyons true ministers of Christ, such as Irenæus and Pothinus, Alexander and Attalus; or true martyrs, such as Blandina and Ponticus.

SECTION V.

Fragments.

Some twenty years ago, on our way home from Lake Leman, we spent a few days in Paris, having an old friend, long resident there, as our guide and commissionaire. Returning to our hotel one night, past the mid hour, a man went by, roughly dressed, and moving quickly. He carried a small lamp and a box about with him, and in his right hand a stick, with an iron hook on the one end, which he struck into each heap of refuse as he went along on the edge of the pavement.

"There goes a *chiffonnier*," said our friend.

"A *chiffonnier!* What is that?"

"A rag-gatherer," he said; "or collector of all sorts of things from the nightly deposits in the streets. There are thousands of these in Paris, who make their livelihood by thus fishing amid the filth of the city."

We had seen such persons in our own land, but chiefly in the form of old women, who come out in the early dawn to search and sift our "ash-buckets." In Paris, however, the trade is more extensive, and is connected not only with a sort of corporation or

"institution," but with a colony, to whose "local habitation" is given the name of "Chiffonville," not far from Belleville. It corresponds somewhat to the "Rag-fair" of London.

The Paris Mission, as we have already noticed, has entered Chiffonville, and found human ears to hear and human hearts to receive the Gospel. Gazed at with wonder, the visitors have been respectfully treated, and are able to tell of true work done amid these poorest of the poor in Paris, these farthest removed of all from Christianity, or civilised life. "This man receiveth sinners" has been seen even here. "He has had compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way."

These rag-gatherers are both male and female, old and young, living together, as in some gipsy village, in the heart of the French metropolis. It is often in such a district that the brightest instances of the great spiritual change occur; and from such an unlikely class God often takes His "hidden ones," to manifest His own grace and the power of His truth. The following narrative from the pen of a worker will greatly interest our readers:—

"Our little 'chiffonnière' is one of a band of rag-pickers inhabiting the vicinity of Belleville.

"One little dreams of the existence of such a settlement, but on turning down a narrow lane, leading out of a more frequented thoroughfare, one comes in sight of what looks almost

like a miniature hamlet among the mountains, a summit of the 'Buttes Chaumont,' with its crown of dark foliage forming a picturesque background to the rustic dwellings of these poor people.

"In and about their houses rags and rubbish lie everywhere, and behind is a large shed where this refuse, found in parts of the great city, is picked and sorted, in order, if possible, to be turned to advantage.

"When we make our appearance, women and children come out of their doors to look at us. Within, some of their men are to be seen smoking, drinking, or card-playing; and all have such a disreputable appearance that we have been warned of the danger of going amongst them; but nevertheless we are always well received, and pictures and tracts accepted with thankfulness. Some few have from time to time been persuaded to attend a neighbouring meeting, and a little band of children has been gathered to join us at the Sunday school. Of these, this little girl is the one who gives us most encouragement. A poor, neglected, motherless child, accustomed, like the rest of the community, to go out rag-gathering every morning before daylight, and spending the rest of her time in dirt and idleness, she has reached the age of thirteen or fourteen without knowing how to read, and ignorant as a little heathen of all true religion.

"Now, however, her father has consented to her being placed at a day school, where she attends regularly, and takes great interest in learning to read and write. She has also come into possession of a New Testament, and gets her father to help her to learn the texts of Scripture set her at school.

"One day she had been repeating to her teacher the verse, 'Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden,' &c., and this led to some remarks on the burden of sin.

"'What is sin?' she was asked.

"'It is disobeying God.'

"'Have you any sins?'

"'Yes; but I do not sin so much now as I used. I ask God to forgive me my sins.'

"'What do we call that when we ask something of God?'

"'It is praying.'

"'Well, how do you pray? tell me about it.'

"'I ask God to forgive me, and I ask Him to help me to learn my verse at school, and to learn to read, because I do so much want to know how to read; only everybody does not know that I pray. Father does not think that I pray. I don't do it when he is there, because I can't say it out loud.'

"'But you need not pray aloud; you might say it in a whisper.'

"'Oh no! I don't like to do it before father. *I always pray when I go out rag-gathering in the morning, with my basket on my back.* I pray for father and I pray for my brother, because I have a big brother who is bad, and he does not live at home with us, so I pray to God to forgive him too.'

"This conversation will show that we have reason to hope that the truths of the Gospel are beginning to influence the heart of this poor child, and we trust that she may be the means of bringing others around her under its influence also. She is now placed with friends who have her under training for service. This is at her own request, as she said, 'Je ne veux plus aller chiffonner.'"

Of another stray one gathered in from her wanderings, and passing from the gay *bal* to the quiet *réunion*, and from that, we trust, into the fold of the Shepherd, we have a brief but touching narrative given in a private letter: showing in what unlikely places the good Shepherd finds His sheep.*

* We have already noticed the imperfect views of sin manifested among the people. Let the two following illustrations, given us by a friend, be taken as confirmations:—

"One Sunday night,—it was the night of a *fête*, and the city was in its gayest costume,—M—— —— came from a ball-room close by, and entered by chance our Grenelle station. She was much excited, and hardly knew where she went, or what she did. Before the close of the meeting, she was seen weeping bitterly, and when some Christian friends spoke to her, she knelt down, and seemed as if she would have dug herself into the ground in her despair. Finding it impossible to leave the poor girl alone, as she had no alternative but that of returning to her life of sin and degradation, one who was deeply interested by her account, took her to his house, till some home could be provided for her.

"Little pet sins is a common distinction among them. Conscience comes into play when sin involves any flagrant wrong to a neighbour; for their sense of justice is keen, but hardly otherwise. Thus it is almost impossible to persuade them that a lie is sin if it *injures no one.* A rather amusing case of this kind occurred where one of our lady workers was trying to convince a poor market-woman that she was a sinner, which she denied, out and out. 'But have you never told any lies?' asked the lady. 'Oh no!' she never told lies. 'To be sure,' she added, 'I have sometimes said the fish was fresh when it was not; but there, God knew that was for my interest; He would not be angry with me.'

"In another case, a servant, of the rough *paysanne* class, quite a different class from the native Parisian, was sent to post letters on New-Year's Eve, and, in order to get through the crowd which besieged the post-office, she exclaimed, 'I have left a sick child at home; let me pass!' and got through. 'But that was a lie,' said her mistress. 'You don't call that a lie,' she replied; 'I said it to get past!' 'No matter, it was not true, it was a sin.' 'A sin! I wish I may never have any worse sins than that,' said the woman, laughing loud at the very idea, 'as if God would be angry with me for that!' Further remonstrance was attempted, but only seemed to add to her amusement, that such a trifle should be regarded so seriously. Yet we believe this woman was honest in the main, and might have been trusted in any matter which she regarded as important."

"M—— was under deep impression of sin, and spoke of the sorrow her conduct gave to her poor parents.

"On the following day she was received into the Refuge, and there she has been for many months, never regretting to have entered it.

"But temptation has often been very great. Several times she has said to me, 'I feel so bad; and sometimes when I fancy I have conquered, I give way, and lose in an hour what I have been struggling for; I am so very wicked.'

"Though very young, sin has made deep inroads in her heart, and she has also to contend against the dreadful vice of strong drink.

"In January she wrote, and after expressing loving New-Year wishes, added, 'At this season one draws near to loved ones in thought. Your *souvenir* touches me deeply, and my heart is full of gratitude. All I desire is to persevere in the good path, where God has placed me, and I hope He will give me strength to fulfil my desire.'

"The directress of the Refuge writes as follows: 'M——'s struggles against drink have been dreadful; she has at last decided to take nothing but water, which she has done for the past six or seven months, and has no wish to drink wine. Her health suffers from the continual efforts she has to make to resist her old temptations, which is painful to see. During the last two or three months she has been more submissive, and has made real progress.'

"May the Lord Jesus look on that poor child, and tell her He has blotted out all her sins.

"It was not till some months afterwards that we discovered a link of special prayer which made this poor girl's recovery deeply interesting. She had spent some months in a pastor's house (two years since), and there had had religious impressions, and obtained some knowledge of her Bible. This pastor's wife could not forget her, and spoke of her on her dying bed, longing to see her once more, that she might plead with her about her soul.

She could not be found, and the dying Christian's prayers never reached *her* ears. But they were laid up before God, and we firmly believe that as they have begun to be answered in this wonderful way, so our blessed Lord Jesus will answer them yet more fully on behalf of this poor wanderer. Will not those who may hear her sad story unite in besieging the throne of grace on her behalf?"

We have already noticed the self-denying and successful labours of Madame Dalencourt, and given some extracts from her reports. But the following letter from her to Mr. Dodds, dated so recently as "10th June, 1879," will be found peculiarly interesting, both as a reminiscence of her own striking history, and a record of the noble work in which she is engaged. As the sister of Lieutenant Bellot, one of the most intrepid of our Arctic explorers, she will perhaps be listened to by some who would not have cared to read the letter of a humble Christian worker:—

"You have expressed a desire to have a short report of our ladies' mission to working-women, and its origin, assuring me that the ladies of Edinburgh would read it with sympathy. Although I have very little leisure, this assurance makes me happy to comply with your request, for, after the sympathy of the Saviour, I know nothing more encouraging than the sympathy of His people. Having much to see in a short space of time, we must make our retrospective journey, stopping shortly at the starting-place, only to wonder in our hearts at the power and compassion of God, who loves to turn the darkness into light, and to change our trials into blessings.

"Brought up in a convent, my eyes were early directed to

higher things, and I hoped to remain there, to work out my salvation, and contribute to that of others; but my mother was opposed to this, because of my youth, when the chaplain conveyed to her my request. My dearly-loved brother, Lieutenant Bellot, who died in the Arctic seas, in the search of Sir John Franklin, had written his journal half in English, half in French, and I heard it whispered, to the horror of all, that he had, in his two voyages, fallen into the habit of reading—the Bible, and that he delighted in it, and even conducted service for the crew, who listened to him with edification! 'The Bible,—the Book of the Protestants!' said the nuns and father-confessors crossing themselves; and I, scarcely believing such a misfortune, secretly and inwardly resolved to find out for myself in what my noble brother delighted.

"I obtained the permission of my family to go to a boarding-school in London, to learn English. The Shepherd placed in the way of His young lamb a gentle guide, who led me by 'the still waters,' and made my thirsty soul drink there. I loved her dearly, and deplored in my heart that she only prayed to Jesus Christ. 'How much she loses,' thought I. We prayed earnestly for each other; and notwithstanding my petitions to the Virgin and the saints, of whom I knew the pretended virtues much better than the real ones of the Saviour, her prayers were answered, and I learned to know the One Mediator who had accomplished my salvation, more than eighteen centuries ago. Some years passed in the study of Protestant and Roman Catholic commentaries, after which, in full conviction, I entered the Protestant Church. Later, the war, of which God has already changed so much of the anguish into blessing, broke out, and sent me with my young child under the Christian roof of Lady Barrow—'my mother in the faith.' Her 'mothers' meetings,' so quietly held, touched me deeply, and I was able to see so much Christian lay-work, that it seemed to me as though one-half of London was working to convert the other half. That moved me to

jealousy, and overcoming an excessive timidity, I entreated the Lord to provide me with the means of 'doing the same' in my beloved country. 'Before I called, He answered,' so far that the 'Society of Friends' offered me, by the help of a War Victims' Fund, means to begin some meetings for women. Returning from London I met my husband at Versailles, where he had taken refuge with the Government on escaping from the Hotel de Ville, and was waiting for the opening of the city, which was in the hands of the Communists. There I had an opportunity of gathering a few women in my room in the hotel at which we were staying. Soon after we settled at Boulogne-sur-Seine, and I began to have meetings in a room at my own house. The women received fivepence for three hours' needlework, during which hymns were sung, a tract read, and a portion of the gospel read and practically explained. We began with five, but gradually the number increased to such an extent that it was necessary to rent a house for the meetings. I had as many as 284 women, and had to give them tickets for admittance. A school was opened on Sundays and on Thursdays, also an industrial school for girls, and Bible classes; all of which were most encouragingly attended. 104 girls, from twelve to eighteen years of age, were trained for service, only two of them being Protestants. This work lasted during six years of great blessing, after which, private circumstances brought us to Paris, but in order not to lose my intercourse with my dear people, I continue to go there every Thursday to superintend meetings for women and children separately. We no longer pay them for their work, and consequently we have not such a good attendance; but I feel greatly encouraged by their coming, for I know now it is not for the bread that perisheth. Some of them, and they are all Roman Catholics, read the Bible at home, induce others to come to the meetings, and a feeling of love reigns amongst them. They form a small and pious congregation.

"Once inside Paris in 1876, I was waiting on the Master to know what He intended me to do with the very little money I was sure of, when dear Mr. M'All kindly granted me, without any payment, his *Salle de Conférences* at Gare d'Ivry, which I chose because of the low, beggarly character and reputation of the people. There were five women at the first meeting, and now thanks be to God I have 109 on the list, whom we gather every Wednesday. The nice *Kiosque* which now replaces this *Salle* is a great improvement; and you will be pleased to learn that one of my friends from Mulhouse holds in an adjoining room a meeting for German women at the same time that I have the meeting for French women in the larger room. One day her surprise and joy were great to see amongst the women one that she had wished to bring to the Saviour when at Mulhouse, and now she has this in view more than ever.

"On the 17th of January we opened at 139 Rue de Rennes another women's meeting at Mr. M'All's new station. This part of Paris is inhabited by a better class of people, many of whom are very much engaged in business, and others, especially the women, firmly attached to their forms of worship. Still we have reason to thank God for the thirty women on our list. One of the principal features of that room is that we distribute tracts at the door, and, by a placard, invite women to enter, which brings in a variety of classes, and sometimes leads to interesting incidental conversations."

We have had frequent occasion to notice the opening of stations time after time in the different districts, and the peculiar circumstances connected with these openings. We give a specimen of the most recent of these, only some months ago :—

"I was at the new *Salle* at Rue de Rennes last night,—I think I never was at such an interesting meeting. Three-fourths of

the people looked as if they never had seen or heard anything of the sort before. When we got there, though it was close upon the hour, there was hardly anybody in the *Salle;* but just *outside* a perfect mob at the door, looking over each other's heads and shoulders to see what there might be inside, yet not venturing one step within the doorway. When the singing began many came in ; and still more, when M. Rouilly began to read a chapter, and the order was given to close the door ;—then, rather than be quite shut out, they streamed in. During the address the *Salle* was quite full, and more than full if possible, for when any went out, others filled their places immediately. The singing was very weak, a sure sign that the people here are new to the whole thing. Such numbers of men, with curious, sharp eyes, evidently trying to make it all out ! Some of them bullet-headed, black-handed, rough fellows, but others gentlemen, or at least, men of comfortable position, with their coats buttoned about them, in that self-satisfied way they have. Frenchmen have such a look about them when they are well-off ! It says as plainly as words, that they are full of *this* world ; and as for another world,—well, if any one has anything to say about it, they will listen, but won't promise to be convinced. Pastor Hollard give such a beautiful address, one could have heard a pin fall : they were riveted. His subject was the Good Samaritan. He drew the picture, and then applied it. 'Do you know the wounded man ? It is you—and I. We have at least two wounds, one in the heart, the other in the conscience ;' and I do think that as he went on, the most self-satisfied man there must have owned he could not say he never felt the smart of the wounds. It was so wisely done,—in appealing to what they could not deny as human, suffering, fallible beings, and then showing them Christ as the only remedy. We sang again, and Dr. Appia spoke before the close."

In one of our own jails, some time ago, there lay

a Romanist under sentence of death. The priest was sent for "to prepare him for his fate," as some say; to help him "to make his peace with God," as others would; to "fortify him with the rites of the Church," as others would; to "administer the consolations of religion," as others would. The priest failed. "The Church" was nothing to the dying criminal; her "ceremonies" he did not care for; her "purgatory" he did not believe; and her "crucifix" was an idle piece of brass to him. The priest exhausted his appliances; and gave up in despair. But before leaving he told the poor man that perhaps a Protestant minister could do or say something to suit his case. The minister came, and told the guilty man the story of the Substitute, dying "the just for the unjust;" and, it is believed, not in vain.

Some of the Parisian priests seem possessed with the same feeling. They have not been able to do anything for the sinner with all their services and masses. They feel this, and are not disinclined to let a Protestant minister try his hand at it.

"Shall we enter these halls?" says a poor *ouvrier*, who has not broken with the priesthood.

"Go, if you like," says the priest; "I can do no more for you."

"Shall I reason with these 're-unionists'?"

"Try," says the priest.

"Shall I receive their tracts?"

"What sort of tracts are they?"

"There is one on the evil of sin and the blood of Christ."

"Let me read it."

He reads it, and as he does, he remarks,—

"Nothing against the Church here; nothing against the Virgin here; a good sort of tract after all. You may read it, if you like."

"May I read their gospels?"

"I won't hinder you; they may perhaps do you good."

From hints we have got, there are some priests in France who, in their hopelessness as to doing anything for the people, are not indisposed to let them do as they like.

"One of our lady-workers," says Mr. Dodds, in a private letter, "stayed with a lady, now dead, who was a devout Roman Catholic. She began to read the Bible with her, and had many an interesting conversation with her on its teaching and meaning. She still, however, clung to her religion, and went regularly to confession. On one of these occasions, she told the priest that she was reading the Bible. He replied that she was doing a very good thing. 'What!' she said, 'is not that forbidden by the Church?' He replied, 'Oh, that was in the dark Middle Ages long ago; you are free to read it now.' She said, 'But I am reading it with a Protestant.'

'Well,' replied the curé, 'a Protestant could not do better than read that Book; you will get nothing but what is good from it. This shows that there may be, indeed that there are, some secret believers, some enlightened Christians, in the Romish Church. He afterwards expressed a great desire to see this Protestant lady, on hearing of the mission work she was engaged in, speaking warmly in admiration of the work that was being done, and of the sacrifice and self-denial which led the workers to quit their native countries, and devote their time and strength to the good of his countrymen. There is every reason to believe that this Roman Catholic lady died believing in Christ, and that the labours of our friend were blessed to the conversion and enlightenment of her soul."

"On Wednesday I went," Mr. Dodds writes also, "to the funeral of a man who has died in peace; he lived just above our *Salle* at St. Antoine. He would never enter our meeting, any more than a Roman Catholic Church, and was strict enough even to forbid his wife going to confession. She was a regular attendant at our meeting, and was in the habit of taking home the tracts and books she got there, and giving them to her husband. The truth seems to have found entrance into his heart. He fell ill in the month of November, and died of consumption. He was visited by one of our workers, whose tender care and unfailing sympathy have been used of God to remove prejudices, and lead him to Christ. He does not seem to have said much, but he never wearied (such were his words) of hearing the Bible read, and of prayer. No priest came near him, but one of his relatives paid for a mass to be said in the parish church, and I accompanied the funeral there to witness the solemn mockery, and pretended miracle, of transubstantiation. The service was muttered in a rapid and careless undertone, and it was with difficulty that I could make out even a single word. The moment that mass was finished, the priest turned his back and left the mourners. He had done so much because he had been paid for it, and to accompany them to the

cemetery was the last thing he would have thought of. Some of his relatives,—his wife and others,—who had not wished the mass, and could not offer opposition, had asked me to go to the cemetery, and conduct a service at the grave. This I was glad to do, as it gave me an opportunity of preaching the Gospel, and testifying to its power. It was a privilege to turn the thoughts of the bystanders to Christ, as the Saviour from sin and from death, and to repeat his dying words, 'I trust in the Saviour Jesus Christ, and I am happy.' He had been a valiant soldier, and on the pall there hung two medals, one of them being from our Queen, for his bravery in the Crimean war. He died before he had time to fight under another banner, but not before he had left a witness behind him of his allegiance to the King of kings. We have reason to believe that his wife has found in her deep sorrow a consolation that not only endures but increases.

"This man is only a type of many of the more intelligent men in Paris, and throughout the cities of France. They are infidels or sceptics, because they have no regard for, but rather hatred against, the Church of Rome, or because they are ignorant of the Gospel, and have never read the Bible. One needs to see the effects and working of this false religion in its own haunts, in order to understand its subtlety and power, and to realise that it is not controversy or discussion, or passionate denunciation of its method and character which will overthrow it, but the simple preaching of the Gospel of Christ, the power of the written Word, and the presence of the Holy Spirit."

Perhaps one of the most notable features in this movement is its steady progression; not merely in the number of stations; not merely in the increase of attendance; but in the spiritual results which have attended it. Nearly eight years has it gone

on, and the interest has not slackened. The attractiveness of the true cross has been proved; and the power of the Gospel to save has been exhibited at all the different stations. Every worker has something to report, either among old or young. The free love of God makes its way wondrously into unlikely hearts, and takes captive unlikely natures. Men listen and wonder, and yield to the declaration of a grace which they had never heard of before, and which they had never supposed to be connected with religion at all.

Writing towards the end of last year (1878), Mr. Dodds thus relates his experience :—

"I never knew of so many, as during these past few weeks, coming to me even here, as well as at the meetings, seeking counsel. Yesterday was 'La Toussaint,' when the people visit the cemeteries in great numbers, to mourn for their dead. We had our meeting at Ménilmontant, at three in the afternoon, and got many in to hear the Gospel. Signor P.'s address was in his best vein, so tender and true, and I felt there was good done. A man lately come to Paris, who found out this meeting 'by chance,' has, we trust, found peace. He and his wife come from Belgium. He attended yesterday both afternoon and evening. He read that little tract 'Confiance,' which I re-wrote from one of Moody's, and it was blessed to him. He is now inquiring about a pastor, and about schools for his children. Last night a young man asked if he might speak, and gave a most happy and convincing testimony. In private he has told me much of his past life. Four months ago, he came to Rivoli station, a sceptic, a lover of the world and its pleasures. A week ago he said to me, 'I cannot say

much, but I have got a joy which I never knew before ; that is all I can say yet.' Judge, then, of my surprise last night, when he stood up and told us so boldly, but modestly, of his firm assurance that Christ had saved his soul, and of the peace this assurance gave him. Last Monday a man told me at the close of the *réunion*, that he had only come at the entreaty of a man whom he had only known for a week, when they were patients together in the hospital. He had since died, and his dying request was that this man should go to Gare d'Ivry, where he himself used to hear what did him good. I was the more struck by this, that the poor man was *totally ignorant* of what the Gospel meant. I am deeply interested in some people at Grenelle, that worst of all quarters. On Sabbath evenings we generally have there between two and three hundred people. The Lord is indeed blessing us. Our evangelist, M. S., has good hopes of a young woman who has lately been stirred up to seek the Lord. Not long ago he had a letter from a teacher in the Haute Savoie, a Roman Catholic district, telling how he had come into the Salle Evangélique one day, had heard the Gospel and received some tracts, and been spoken with at the close ; now he writes to ask for counsel, telling of the peace he has found in Jesus."

"Fools" and "foolishness" seem to have been words freely used at Corinth of old in connection with the Gospel and the cross. To them the apostle makes frequent reference in his epistles to the church in that city. In this respect, I suppose, Paris and Corinth are very much alike.

"I see you are become a fool," said an unbelieving friend to one of the converts; "and we must look out for an asylum for you."

Such was the close of a long conversation, carried far into the night, by the friend just referred to. The believing man was visited by an associate of other days, distinguished in literature and science. The change lately produced was the subject of converse between them; and the difference in their sentiments was soon found to be immense. It was the discovery of this difference, and the Christian's simple avowal of his faith in the salvation of the Son of God, that drew out the taunt, "I see you are become a fool."

Yes; he was a fool to be saved so cheaply, and with so little honour to himself! He was a fool, fit only for an asylum, to adopt a religion at all, as a thing of certainty and earnestness. Better no religion; but at least a religion that will do some credit to a man of science, and be worthy of the human intellect! It is the same story now in France, as in Greece of old.

The good man was troubled for a moment at being thus addressed; but he went to "the Word," and his trouble passed away. He was content to be a fool for Christ's sake.

Among these fragments I must give the following extract from the journal of M. Pointet regarding the Bible-carriage which, filled with precious stores, moves about from town to town, from village to

village, and from fair to fair. It does not directly connect itself with the Paris Mission, but it is strikingly illustrative of the work going on in the land, and is helping greatly to whiten the fields of France :—

"'The fair of Dun le Roi, where I had already been, and was very much pleased, was good. In spite of snow and rain, which fell heavily, and my cold, which was at its height, I remained working four and a-half hours, having, happily, an abundant supply of books. At the most busy moment I felt the carriage fall forward ; Cocote (the horse), worn out with fatigue, had fallen her full length in the mud and across the shaft. She struggled up, but fell again on the other side. As I had only the smallest amount of standing room, by reason of the stores of books, &c., I had great difficulty in disengaging myself, and was in fear of breaking my legs, but got out just in time to save another fall and set the poor animal on her legs, but when taken to the stable she could neither eat nor drink. I returned a good deal upset, but was rejoiced to see half-a-dozen hands held out, waiting their turn. I do not know a greater joy, and my wife and I thanked the Lord. One good woman came to buy a large New Testament ; all crowded round her to know what was in it. Giving an expressive shrug, she said good-humouredly, "It speaks about the Republic," with the air of one who thought it was her rightful business. I turned to the crowd in a moment, and said, "These books do not speak about the Republic, but of that which is, nevertheless, not opposed to it ; it speaks of happiness, of free citizenship ; but to be truly free and happy, one must have peace of mind. O good people, to make a first-rate carriage, you must have the best iron and wood ; and to be good Republicans, you must be true Christians."

"'At Nérondes, in spite of the heavy snow, the peasants

crowded around the carriage, and bought with great interest. "Where is your market, Mr. Innkeeper?" I said. "Oh, it is nothing; don't go there." I went, however, in spite of the cold and the piercing north-east wind. Entering the courtyard of the largest hotel, the host advanced, a comfortable-looking man of forty; there are so many such in France. I breakfast in the hotel, going out at three in the morning, and often not returning till night, when I find myself again seated in the chimney corner by a blazing log. We talk of one thing and another, and at last of the curés, when, innkeeper though he be, he exclaimed, "I'll have no more to do with them; they teach us lies, and don't believe them themselves." At this same market of Baugy, what eagerness there was to buy our large New Testaments! It was a grand day. All came, and wanted the book. This work over, I led the horse into the sunshine, and went to the nearest café for a cup of coffee. We often do this, that they may not be able to say we are avaricious and only working for gain. Returning, I found a number of my customers around a large store, and began to talk to them. I was struck with the number who did not believe in the existence of God, or of their own soul.'

"Again he writes, 'Notwithstanding all the discomforts attendant on a work of this kind, our enthusiasm continually increases. We are cheerful and happy, and praise the Master for permitting us to forsake our home, and, carrying our furniture with us, to travel summer and winter, from town to town. We should think ourselves for ever dishonoured if the question were raised of our settling down again in a fixed home. Faith transforms everything; all is changed in passing through the Divine laboratory.'

"We find him in May in Orleans, where, as he says, he had 'more to fear from his tongue than from Bishop or police.' The sale went on briskly, and at nine o'clock at night there were more than 500 people round the carriage. 'But Satan and his emissaries were there too,' he writes, 'and menacing

threats were hurled at me. A few energetic words stilled them for a moment, only to begin again with renewed force. One man, half a gentleman, shouted with a loud voice, "They are not crying out at your books, but because you are a liar, and have done nothing but lie since you stood there." At this speech more than 200 voices shrieked and howled, and a dozen rough fellows laid hold of the carriage to overturn it. I was, happily, able to jump out. In the midst of the confusion a big man stepped forward, seized my hand, and in a stentorian voice, which silenced the crowd, exclaimed, "I am a Catholic, but I thank you; you are a good man, and I thank you for your words of truth. You try to enlighten us, but they will not understand." Never was such testimony less expected or more welcome. For hours this young man had the courage to uphold me and my work. I remounted my carriage, and addressed the Jesuit, challenging him to prove me a liar. He replied that it was false that the curés denied the Scriptures to the people. "The laws of the Church *permitted* it." "Indeed!" said I; "then your ignorance is as great as your bad faith." More followed, and for days I half expected a visit from the police, but, happily, none had been present.'

"At another gate of the city he was accosted by a man who said he must be more moderate. 'In what way?' he asked. 'Why, you say the Pope here, and the Pope there.' 'You heard me say that, did you? take care, or you will do as the liars do.'

"Thus exposed to calumny and violence, 'It is necessary,' he writes, 'to be careful not only of what one says, but of what one does not say. Ours is a strange work, from one extreme to the other: some days full of encouragement and blessing, others when one's words fall as if on hard, polished marble, awakening no response or sympathy.'

"'I always try to begin my remarks with something original. As the people crowded around me, I said to them, "What is it that man needs, to go through life? Good bread, the best

wine, plenty of gold and silver; what more can he want? Ah! you may well laugh, for you know that it is possible to be miserable as well as rich; there are plenty of suicides among the rich. What, then, does man really need? *The Truth.* He was made *by* God, and *for* God, and apart from Him there is no peace nor happiness. There is a Book which will tell you what you must do. Remember Him who has said, "Without me you can do nothing." I began my sale, and in about an hour had disposed of at least fifty New Testaments, till, unhappily, my stock was exhausted.'"

The Mission efforts have not been confined to Parisians or Frenchmen. They have embraced all who could be approached: not only the nations congregated at the great Exhibition, but those members of them permanently resident in Paris, such as the English and German artisans. The classes for the English have been already noticed; but the Mission has not overlooked the Germans; and Mr. Dodds has been able to gather a German meeting, which prospers wonderfully. It is strange that in Paris at this moment, all kinds of efforts seem to succeed; as if some unknown and unexplained influence were at work throughout the whole city, drawing men's hearts towards faith and truth; so that whatever is done is sure to succeed so far; failure in plans for good being exceptional and rare. The following is the statement by Mr. Dodds, as to the German meeting:—

"At the commencement of the Mission, some work was done

among the English workmen in the quarter of Montmartre. This has since been taken up by other friends, and, until very lately, the work of the Mission has been wholly among the French. Now we have added a meeting for Germans. Many speaking the German language have come to Paris from Alsace and Lorraine, and there are also not a few from Hesse and Prussia. The quarter where we have opened this meeting is La Villette, and the name of the street is 'Rue d'Allemagne' (*i.e.*, Germany Street!) M. Vischer Sarrasin, of Bâle, has kindly sent us a number of hymn-books, many of the hymns being translations from the English. From other friends we have gathered a small library, and begun a meeting once a-week. It has gone on increasing, till it has risen to above seventy persons. One asked for special prayer not long ago, and others have asked eagerly for the loan of Bibles. The German pastors, and several German laymen give most hearty help in this little effort, which we ask the readers of the *Quarterly* to remember in their prayers."

Another fragment we give in the shape of an extract from a workman's letter, dated Paris :—

"For some time I have been a little better; my employer wishes me to work, or he will send me away from the factory. I am so weak that I can never finish my day's work. I do not gain much money, but I am always happy, because I belong to Christ. On the Sundays, when I am not too tired, I go to the meeting. To-day I have remained the whole day in bed, meditating there on the Holy Book. It is truly the comfort of the poor and suffering. Would that it were known and read by every one! I learn from the newspapers that bold and earnest missionaries from England are preaching the Gospel in all lands, and even at Rome.

"In all the workshops at Paris, the Protestants are well spoken of, and nothing but evil of the priests.

"I like to think that some day God will have as many Christians in France as in foreign lands. This is my most earnest desire.—Yours truly in Jesus Christ, E—— P——."

There is a work going on in the French metropolis, almost as various, though not so vast, as in the great cities of our own land. Benevolent and religious schemes are conducted by self-denying Christians, who, without the ostentation of the nun or the monk or the priest, are daily moving about in their quiet offices of mercy, doing a truer work, and asking no praise. Their influence is felt by the community, while they themselves remain unseen. Their words penetrate and transform; not by reason of their vehemence, but by the calm sincerity with which they are uttered.

The enterprise is quite a peculiar one, and the success has been as peculiar. The method adopted is not in the ordinary run of missions or missionary work: save that it takes for granted that the Gospel is the power of God unto salvation.

What should we say if two or three zealous Frenchmen were to come to London and start twenty-three meetings in different parts of our metropolis? What should we say if these meetings were all successful; every hall filled with the working-men of the city and its suburbs? And what should we say if these meetings, instead of

losing their attractiveness, during eight years, increased both in interest and in numbers? Should we not be amazed? Would not all London be stirred to ask, What is it all about?

The phenomenon now exhibited in Paris is just such as the above; and though it does not directly concern us, shall we not be led to ask, What does this mean? Nay, more, shall we not be led to something more practical than bare inquiry, and hasten to the help of the overburdened labourers, chiefly our own kinsmen, in that foreign city?

No mission has ever been carried on so cheaply as Mr. M'All's. The smallness of the cost is quite amazing. But, then, one reason of this is the amount of self-sacrifice on the part of the workers; not one of whom receives anything like adequate remuneration for his services. This state of things, however, cannot last always; and the Mission must be put upon a less uncertain footing. We must remember that our responsibilities are not exhausted in our admiration of the work, and praise of the self-denying labours of the workers. A decided and energetic effort must be made to establish the Mission securely and permanently. And the sooner the better.

In speaking of the Mission generally, I would remind the reader of its double character;—to

young as well as old. That to the young stands greatly in need of help. From nearly the commencement of the Parisian work, the claims of the young had engaged the attention of Mr. M'All. Mr. Heriot entered on a work which had been vigorously prosecuted previously by Mrs. M'All and Madame Rouilly. That sphere of labour demands vigorous effort. It is so important, so interesting, and so large. And we at home are bound to consider how we can best help it forward.

Everywhere throughout Paris we find Christian work going on in some form or other. The city seems just now to resemble a vast old quarry newly reopened, where the different levels and strata show themselves; and the immensity of the work to be done is beginning to be understood. The workmen are few and scattered; some in little groups, some single; perched here and there on heights, or hidden in fissures; carrying on the tedious work of digging, or splitting, or carrying off the stones to their destined position in some house, or palace, or temple.

"Speed boldly, Jean, my son, speed boldly; the safety of God's elect depends upon thy speed."

It was a French peasant woman, two hundred years ago, that is said to have spoken these words to her little boy of ten one morning at the door of a cottage which faced a gorge of the Cevennes.

She knew that five hundred of the persecuted were to meet for worship that day among the mountains; and her boy had, from a high rock, caught a glimpse of the soldiers in march to surprise the congregation. She knew that he could reach the hiding-place by ways which the soldiers knew not; and without a moment's delay she despatched him up the cliffs, with the words, "Speed boldly, Jean, speed boldly."

It is into this land of the persecuted that the Gospel has again come in power, and is working its way through the nation. Is it to be turned back, or is it to be "resurrection from the dead," to the cities and villages, where once it was so widely accepted? The crisis is a momentous one, and the urgency is great. There is need of haste, lest the opportunity be lost, and the enemy rush in to undo all that has been done. "Speed boldly," then, is the message to the present labourers; "the safety of God's elect depends upon your speed;" lose not a moment. The work is great, the time is short, and the enemy is on the watch. How long his wrath may be curbed, and how long the earth may continue to "help the woman," we dare not forecast. Precious is the present season, and wonderful the openings on every side. This season must not be lost; these opportunities must be seized at once.

France's day of blessing may be also Europe's day;—Europe armed to the teeth for war, and hopeless of peace,—Europe disintegrated everywhere by infidelity and socialism and ungodliness and lawlessness,—Europe, that in the persons of her princes and statesmen, is trying every method to keep down the dreaded outburst,—except the ONE,—the only one,—that could accomplish the end, the Gospel of the grace of God.

Unsought for, this one healing influence has found its way into Paris, and shown that it is a power in the earth, a power among nations, a power of which rulers, if they were wise, would, without delay, avail themselves; not to bridle the waves, but to still them; not to chain their peoples, but to put them in possession of a liberty which, instead of overturning thrones, would establish them; a liberty which, instead of letting loose human passions, would transform them into the mutual confidence and kindness between man and man. Paris has already felt the tranquillising influence of the Gospel. Shall not all Europe feel it too? The effects of the present evangelical movement on the kingdoms of the Continent may be far wider than men are disposed to believe. France has for a hundred years been the maelström which has kept Europe in unceasing whirl. If the Book of peace,

cast into this vortex, shall arrest its eddies, the results will be felt beyond both Rhine and Danube.

SECTION VI.

The Hymnology.

I know the Latin hymns of the Church of Rome; and I am aware of the high praises lavished on them by their advocates and admirers in Protestant lands and Churches. Indeed, the eulogies bestowed on them by æsthetic outsiders are much higher than those of Romanists themselves.

I mean neither to praise nor dispraise them. My object in referring to them has no reference to their merits.

What I mean to say in connection with them is that they are in a dead language, and are not understood by the millions of France, peasant or citizen, in the parish church or the cathedral. Many of the priests themselves, who chant them daily, know nothing of their meaning.

In such a case, there can be no worship except that of the organ and the unintelligible sounds: if these can be called by that name. Religion is reduced to a performance,—service done by proxy, and supposed to be accepted by God, because acted

canonically by accredited priestly performers, who have undertaken the responsibilities of the worshipper.

The hymns of the Paris Mission are not of this kind, nor devised for such purposes. They are meant to be joined in by the audience; and are, of course, understood by those who sing them. They are not sounds to be listened to, but words to be sung; not musical notes to produce a physical impression, but true utterances of the soul, in which all the singers join,—fitted to lift the soul to God.

This is a new thing for the *ouvriers* of France. They can understand all that is said; they can join in all that is sung. This part of the Roman bondage is now laid bare. The Church had doomed them not to comprehend a word of its worship: or rather it had made worship impossible. But the chain is breaking; the bondage of the unknown tongue is disappearing; and "liberty of worship," in this sense as well as in others, is beginning to be known. Few think of this part of the old bondage; or are alive to the profanity that thus indirectly but effectually closes the lips of worshippers.

The reaction from this, no doubt, is at present telling upon Paris. Men see the difference between listening to a performer, as if they were at a *café chantant*, and taking part in sacred song. A church is not a theatre nor an opera. Prayer and praise

are things personal to each worshipper. Rome has always denied this, offering to undertake the praises of the worshipper as well as the responsibilities of the sinner; and France has hitherto been one of the nations that have been content to listen to the musical performances of Rome, and to accept its offer of performing religion for her.

These Mission *cantiques* have suggested the question to thousands, ought we not personally to take part in religious service?

It is not merely that the hymns are pleasant, and the tunes soothing; there is something deeper than this, in the influence which they are exercising both in the house and in the *réunion salle.* They have led to the discovery that the people themselves have a true part in worship, from which the tyranny of Romish sacerdotalism has shut them out. They are *entitled* to worship God, each one for himself.

Of the hymns we have already given several specimens. But we must ask our readers to get copies of the hymn-book for themselves, and to practise the singing in their families. Even with a slight knowledge of French the hymns can easily be followed; and the alternation of a French and English *cantique* is as lively as it is pleasant, round the Sabbath evening fireside or table.

From the Reformation era, the French Protestants

had given both hymns and psalms a place in public worship; and the different editions of their Psalter, with the music, are innumerable. Some ten or twelve of these small volumes,—so far back as the beginning of the seventeenth century,—are in our possession: and there have always been French Protestant hymns down to our own day.* The noble volume of Felix Bovet, "Histoire du Psautier des Eglises Réformées," published in Paris in 1872, gives the largest amount of information that has been given in connection with any psalter. He gives a complete list of the various editions, beginning with the year 1541, and ending with 1870. They are 300 in all. In 1837, there appeared an article in a well-known religious periodical,—*Le Semeur*, on "Hymnology in France." This I have not seen. But the following paragraph from it, quoted in the life of Dr. Cæsar Malan, in reference to the hymns of that revered divine, is worth quoting here:—"Among ourselves, with the revival of faith has come the revival of its song; and that, too, after a silence of more than a hundred years. God has taught His servants to perpetuate the

* A French priest attempted a volume of hymns, under the title of "Cantiques de l'Ame dévote," in 1786. His name was Durand; and, strange to say, he has set his verses to common tunes,—"accommodés á des airs vulgaires." Part of his volume is filled up with the usual Latin hymns for the seasons and festivals.

language of His praise, and has given them new hymns through the instrumentality of this truly Christian poet. M. Malan has reawakened the lay. His hymns belong already to history, because they have interwoven themselves, and while the revival lasts, will interweave themselves with the joys and sorrows of the Church." *

The hymnology of the Mission is thus one of its most important and effective parts, and the *cantiques populaires*, with their lively tunes, are doing immense service, carrying the Gospel, as on the wings of a gentle breeze, into every recess of the city; not only drawing out the crowd to listen to the happy melodies, but sending it back laden with the Divine truth to which these melodies are joined. The songs go everywhere; and with them the truth goes everywhere. Can Rome meet this irresistible influence? Hearts are taken captive, and minds instructed; and men ask, How have we never seen all this before?

The Mission hymns are most suitable to their purpose, both in tone and in substance. They are not frivolous nor jaunty, like some of our English ones. They are cheerful but solemn. They do not sacrifice sense to sound or rhyme. They are tasteful as well as thoughtful, with more of a classic air about

* "Life and Labours of Cæsar Malan," p. 183.

them than is usual with revival hymns; yet simple and direct; filled with Bible truth, and conveying the good news in many a varied form. They are not "full of sound and fury," and they all "signify something." The first selection was found too small; and a larger one was published: of which there is preparing a new and cheaper edition, in a stronger binding to withstand the peculiar usage of the Parisian *ouvrier*, who invariably *doubles back* his hymn-book, when he employs it in singing.

Some of the hymns are translations; a large number are new. Mr. M'All himself has no less than thirty-eight of his own; M. Saillens, forty-three; the other hymn-writers contributed fewer; but among these sweet singers appear the names of *three* Monods. A glance at the *Table Alphabétique* will show the variety, both in hymns and hymnists.

As I have interspersed throughout this narrative several specimens of the hymns, I need not add any here. The selection is admirable; and will, I am sure, commend itself to our readers, who ought by all means to procure a copy of the *cantiques* for themselves. In them they will find the *creed* of the Mission; and learn what truths are now circulating through the nation, through the medium of sacred song. In the absence of creed and cate-

chism, these hymns will furnish an answer to the question of an inquirer, "What do these evangelists teach?" They teach what they sing. They have embodied their Gospel in happy verse and melody; and that Gospel, thus enshrined in song, is quite in accordance with the "Confessions" of the Reformation Churches. It may be that by these hymns many in France will be led to study these ancient declarations of a faith, once widely held on both sides of the Rhine,—a faith which has never wholly died out, and which is now manifestly beginning to revive, and which, in its revival, promises to unite the nineteenth with the sixteenth century in an unexpected way and at a most unlikely time, turning back the era of unbelief and error to the era of faith and truth.

SECTION VII.

Evangelists and their Gospel.

Three hundred years ago, when the Word of God was working its way in strength through Europe, the question arose, once and again, who is to be the Reformer of France? Berquin, Farel, Calvin were named. But the question of leadership soon was settled by the martyrdom or banishment of

the noblest of France's sons. The shepherds were smitten, and the sheep were scattered.

"Farel would have been the man fitted for this work. He was one of those whose simple, serious, earnest tones carry away the masses. His voice of thunder made his hearers tremble. The strength of his convictions created faith in their souls, the fervour of his prayers raised them to heaven. When they listened to him, 'they felt,' as Calvin says, 'not merely a few light pricks and stings, but were wounded and pierced to the heart; and hypocrisy was dragged from those wonderful and more than tortuous hiding-places which lie deep in the heart of man.' He pulled down and built up with equal energy. Even his life,—an apostleship full of self-sacrifice, danger, and triumph,—was as effectual as his sermons. He was not only a minister of the Word; he was a bishop also. He was able to discern the young men fitted to wield the weapons of the Gospel, and to direct them in the great war of the age. Farel never attacked a place, however difficult of access, which he did not take. Such was the man then called into France, and who seemed destined to be its reformer." *

Is God now preparing a reformer for France,—a theologian and an evangelist,—a Calvin and a Farel in one? In what direction do the leadings of His providence now point? Is the present work to glide on quietly, widening and deepening without noise? Or are we to be startled some day with the news that a Paul, or a Luther, or a Calvin has arisen? Is the present restraint upon priestly hatred to be continued? Or is the telegraph some midnight

* Merle D'Aubigné's "Reformation in Europe in the Time of Calvin," vol. i., p. 502.

to flash through Europe the intelligence that a long-laid Vatican plot has at length been ripened, and that the Pope has found tools among the "Legitimists" of France to carry it out, if not in massacre, at least in banishment? *

But, with or without a leader, will France return to THE FAITH of the Reformation? And is it this that is now going on? Is the present movement working back in the direction of the old landmarks? The converts of the Mission know nothing of the Gallican Confession or the Geneva Catechism; but the truth embodied in these is that which is taught in the Bible which they read, the addresses to which they listen, the hymns which they sing, and the books which are circulated among them.

I do not enter into the question of creeds. I speak of them merely as the classification of truth; and it is of no small importance that the minds of

* In August, 1572, the Duke of Guise called together the captains of the Swiss and French guards, and thus addressed them: "Gentlemen, the hour is come, when, under the sanction of the king, we may at length avenge ourselves upon the accursed race,—the enemies of God. The beast is in the snare, and must not be suffered to escape. Honour and profit may now be won cheaply, and that effected without peril which so many brave captains, at the expense of so much blood, have in vain sought to accomplish." Is such a thing possible again? Nothing more likely if "legitimacy" gets into the ascendant. A century and a-half of restraint has only whetted the appetite of Rome for slaughter. Some Duke of Guise may yet appear who will "cry havoc, and let slip the dogs of war."

of the Mission converts should be turned in the direction of the ancient faith for which their fathers suffered. The Reformation exhibited a singular example of unity in belief, among the different nations; and the "Harmony of Confessions,"—a volume which gathered all Protestant creeds together,—is of itself a study, not only in theology, but in the history of mind. The agreement of so many minds of diverse nationalities, without concert or conference, is a puzzle to the metaphysician, while it is a triumph to the Christian. The Gallican Confession, shorter than most of its fellows, but quite as explicit, as a brief scheme of classified doctrine drawn from Scripture, is a noble heirloom which France must not surrender. It may, perhaps, come up now, and play no inconsiderable part in the development of the nation's future.*

* The Gallican Confession, first published in 1561, in French, and afterwards translated into Latin in 1566, bears the following title :— "Confession de foy, faitte d'un commun accord par les François, qui desirent vivre selon la pureté de l'evangile de nostre Seigneur Jesus Christ." It was presented, in French (in 1559), to Francis II., at Amboise, in the name of all the godly of France, and again, in 1561 at Poissy, to Charles IX., and then afterwards published in Latin by the pastors of the French Churches, with a preface to all other evangelical pastors. As a specimen of this noble document, I give the following extract, in the Old French, from the article on Justification :—"Nous croyons que toute nostre justice est fondée en la remission de noz péchez ; comme aussi c'est nostre seule félicité, comme dit David. Parquoy nous rejettons tous autres moyens de nous pouvoir instifier devant Dieu, et sans présumer de nulles vertus

As to the message and the messengers in the present enterprise, let me add the following remarks.

There are several qualifications specially needed in this expanding work. For some schemes the mere keeping of machinery in motion may, to a certain extent, suffice. In this Mission such routine, commonplace discharge of duty is little better than a drag; and it is not a drag, but motive-power, that is needed here. Energy, fervour of spirit, self-denial, patient endurance of toil, undaunted zeal, with love and faith, such as all victorious reformers and successful evangelists have possessed;—these are what the Mission requires, and without which it cannot hope for conquest. My object is not to praise nor to dispraise; not to point out who have and who have not these qualities; but to remind all who engage in it what the enterprise demands. It would rather struggle on with few thoroughly good labourers than have itself weakened by unsound or

ne mérites, nous nous tenons simplement à l'obèissance de Jesus Christ, laquelle nous est allouée tant pour couvrir toutes noz fautes, que pour nous faire trouver grâce et faveur devant Dieu. Et de fait nous croyons qu'en déclinant de ce fondement tant peu que ce soit, nous ne pourrions trouver ailleurs aucun repos, mais serions tousjours agitez d'inquiétude: d'autant que iamais nous ne sommes paisiblement avec Dieu, iusques à ce que nous soyons bien résolus d'estre aymez en Jesus Christ veu que nous sommes dignes d'estre haïs en nous mesmes."

half-hearted ones. They who have gone into the field understand that they are to throw into their work their whole strength and soul. "Not weary in well-doing" is one special watchword; but there is another which goes beyond this—"Enduring hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ."

The biographies of Martin Boos, and Felix Neff, and John Frederick Oberlin might be read with great advantage both as guides and stimulants. Some have thought that our Northern training both in England and Scotland has given us habits both of plodding and of daring which other nations do not possess. But these three above named are specimens of German and French workers, fitted both to humble and to quicken the most zealous of us all.

If any permanent work is to be done, there must be, above all things, *a clear theology;* and the evangelists must be men giving no uncertain sound as to the way of life. Mistakes here will be fatal. There are some men of fervent spirit and hard-working capacity whose brains are mist and confusion, and whose sermons are quite a theological wilderness. They put things in their wrong places; they turn the Gospel upside down; they either mistake the great truths of Scripture, or they set them in a wrong order, which wrong order, like a misplaced plus or minus in algebra, reduces all to confusion, or

evolves only error. A preacher may speak, by the hour, of Christ, and faith, and pardon, and regeneration, and good works, and yet preach no Gospel. It is the way or order in which these are stated that makes the Gospel. The mixing up together of faith, and love, and works takes all the "good news" out of the Gospel, and all coherence out of the truth of God.

That the Son of God has done what the sinner should have done, and suffered what the sinner should have suffered, is the foundation of the great deliverance. That we are saved by another's merits, another's works, another's death, by "foreign worth," as one has expressed it, is the essence of the glad tidings. But if we mix up the work of the Substitute with the doings of the sinner, and preach that we are partly saved by the one and partly by the other, we make void the cross of Christ. If we mingle together the repentance of the sinner with the sacrifice of the Substitute, we both misunderstand the meaning and deny the value of the sacrifice. If we say that Christ died for the godly, not the ungodly; that God justifies the godly, not the ungodly; that Christ does not receive all kinds of sinners, but only those who are duly sensible of their sins; that we must qualify ourselves for coming to Christ by prayer and faith and love and

contrition and good deeds, we utterly subvert the finished work of Calvary, and deny the free love of God. To preach that anything is to be done by the sinner to obtain mercy, and recommend himself to the favour of God, is but to preach a milder Popery. As it was the blindness of the blind man, and the leprosy of the leper that brought them to Christ, and Christ to them, so it is the evil that is in us that fits us for Him, who is the Deliverer from evil. "The whole need not a physician, but they that are sick."

Men often confound what the sinner gets after coming to Christ, with what he is to bring with him. What is he to obtain after coming? Everything that is good and holy and blessed. What is he to bring with him? Nothing but his sins; and if any man preaches that the sinner is to bring something more and something better, he misleads the wanderer. The Gospel is God's welcome to the children of men;—as fallen, as wanderers, as evil-doers. It is Christ's knock at the door of the poor and wretched and miserable and blind and naked. It takes every man just as it finds him, and just where it finds him. It addresses itself to each son of Adam.

Let me suppose a false teacher telling a sinner that he is to look up all the good things he has

about him and bring them as qualifications, in virtue of which, demerit will be overlooked, and himself made welcome. He comes in compliance with the exhortation he has heard, and he counts on being received in respect of the gifts he brings.

"Who art thou," he is asked by the Son of God, "and what dost thou want?"

"I am a son of Adam, and I am seeking favour and forgiveness at Thy hands."

"But what are these things that thou bringest with thee?"

"They are gifts, without which I was told that I must not approach Thee."

"Did I ask for gifts, or did I simply ask for thyself, just as thou wert, when my Gospel came to thee?"

"Thou didst ask for nothing but myself and my sins; but I was told that something more would be expected."

"What hast thou brought?"

"I have brought my repentance and contrition and resolutions of amendment. They are poor enough, but they are the best that I could work up out of my stony heart."

"Where didst thou get these things? Did I give them to thee, or didst though get them from thyself?"

"I got them from myself; but I trust that though they are mine, and not Thine, Thou wilt accept them for what they are worth, and because of them accept me; for I did not dare to come to Thee without something, however small."

"But what is that self-made repentance worth?"

"I know not; but I was told that I must have some good thing about me; otherwise my coming would be in vain. But, Lord, what shall I do with it? Wilt Thou not look favourably on it, and on me because of it?"

"I tell thee that it is worth nothing; nay, it is worth less than nothing; it is an insult to Me; for it takes for granted that I am an 'austere man,' a man accepting gifts and bribes. Even were it better than it is, it would profit thee nothing."

"What, then, shall I do with these gifts that I have brought?"

"Throw them all away, and come to Me as thou art, without one good feeling. I need no gifts to induce Me to receive the sinner. I *give*,—I do not *sell*: I give to the *unworthy*, I do not bargain with the *worthy*, if such there be."

"But must I not repent and be broken-hearted?"

"Yes; but you must come to Me for the broken heart; I am exalted, a Prince and a Saviour, 'to give repentance.' You cannot break that heart of

yours; but I can, and will. Put it into my hands simply as it is, and you will soon know the wondrous change."

One thing that often hindered, or at least retarded the Gospel 300 years ago, in Europe, was the attempt at compromise, sometimes put forth on both sides; cunningly by the Romanists, timidly by some of the Reformers. More than once did this trouble Calvin; and sometimes, it may be, stirred his fervent spirit to the use of strong words,—words which only those who knew how much was at stake can properly judge. "If we can be satisfied with a half Christ," he exclaims on one occasion, "we could easily come to terms (with Rome)." The tendency to "concession," before which some feeble spirits were giving way, must be resisted. "Pray," wrote he, "with all earnestness that we may be strengthened with the spirit of boldness."

Yet there is the other side of this,—rigid resistance to all kinds of conciliation. "It was the misfortune of that age," writes Dr. Merle D'Aubigné, "that many fastened upon a few differences of detail rather than upon the great truths on which they were agreed."* Of more ages than that of the Reformation has this been found true; and few have learned the holy medium between uncharitable

* "History of the Reformation in Europe," vol. vii., p. 484.

censoriousness and the indifference of a reckless liberality. Christian discrimination and large-souled charity ought to be inseparable. We love the truth, we hate the error; yet we are slow to judge or to suspect or to draw conclusions which, after all, may be as illegitimate as they are unkind.

Bible truth is *twofold*, two-sided; and we must always turn it round to know exactly what each side means, and to check unfairness in dealing with it The demands of a human logic have not always lain in the direction of truth. We push past the metaphysical thickets which would detain us from the cross by discussions as to the quality and quantity of the faith that is saving, and rest not till we are landed in *the great history of the Son of God*, in the knowledge of which there is eternal life.

I feel urged here to notice, though briefly, the way in which the eloquent Vinet has, by means of one-sided logic, mystified the way of life. His name is great in France, and it is all the more needful to mark his departure from the Reformation theology. Faith saves, he says, because it has the "germ of holiness;" and in the saved thief "the Divine eye saw the tree in the germ." "My faith is to take the place of works which I have not done." "Faith taking the place of works; faith reckoned as righteousness; faith becoming *the condition*

of a new covenant, as obedience was that of the old." *

In opposition to these statements (and there are many similar), I set the two following extracts, the first from Melancthon, the second from Luther :—

"You stick to the fancy of Augustine, who, though right in rejecting the righteousness of human reason, imagines that we are justified by that fulfilling of the law which the Holy Spirit works in us. So you imagine that men are justified by faith, because it is by faith that we receive the Spirit, that thereafter we may be able to be just by that fulfilment of the law which the Spirit works. This imagination places justification in our fulfilment of the law, in our purity or perfection, although this renewal ought to follow faith. But turn your eyes from that renewal, and from the law altogether, to the promise and to Christ, and think that it is on Christ's account that we become just, that is, accepted before God, and that it is thus we obtain peace of conscience, and not on account of that renewal. For even this renewing is insufficient (for justification). We are justified by faith alone, not because it is a root, as you write, but because it apprehends Christ, on account of whom we are accepted ; this renewing, although it necessarily follows, yet does not pacify the conscience. Therefore not even love, though it is the fulfilling of the law, justifies, but only faith ; not because it is some excellence in us, but only because it takes hold of Christ ; we are justified, not on account of love, not on account of the fulfilling of the law, not on account of our renewal, although these are the gifts of the Holy Spirit, but on account of Christ ; and Him we take hold of by faith alone. Believe me, my Brentius, this controversy regarding the righteousness which is by faith is a mighty one, and little understood."

* Vinet's "Vital Christianity," p. 286-7. English edition.

"I am accustomed, my Brentius, for the better understanding of this point, to conceive this idea, that there is no quality in my heart at all, call it either faith or charity; but instead of these I set Christ Himself, and I say this is my righteousness, He is my quality and my formal righteousness as they call it, so as to free myself from looking into law or works."

The difference between these two theologies is very wide, yet very subtle, especially as expounded by Vinet: and the way in which the matter is argued reminds us sadly of the logic of the Romish doctors, who conceded as strongly as Luther could wish that salvation was from Christ, yet mixed up love and faith and works as conditions of salvation, —terms of the bargain between the sinner and God.

This was one of the keenly-fought positions of the Reformation battle, the loss of which was sure to bring with it, as Melancthon thought, the loss of the great doctrine of justification. The same battle has often been fought over again between Protestants themselves; and the name of Vinet has again awakened it, not only in France and Switzerland, but in America and England. The antagonism between the Lausanne Professor and the Wittemberg Reformer is very manifest. It is no verbal conflict, nor straw-splitting distinction. The very essence of God's good news to the sons of Adam is touched by it; and the pacification of the sinner's troubled conscience depends on its right adjustment. The

gospel of Vinet would not have quieted Luther's soul, nor relieved his terrors. That which he felt he needed was the perfection of another's righteousness reckoned to him by God, in consequence of which he was to be treated as a righteous man; not the germ of a mystical goodness wrapt up in his own faith, by reason of which he might claim the favour of God and the benefits of the great expiation.

The "fiction of another's righteousness" is the formula by which both mysticism and rationalism unite in decrying the Pauline theology. For these two systems of error are far more akin to each other than is generally credited. Whether the former should be allowed to call itself "spiritual" instead of "sensational," and the latter "intellectual" instead of "sceptical," we do not say. All we suggest is that both oppose the Apostolic Gospel,—which is, that God can only deal with the sinner favourably on the footing of another's perfection: and that he who would influence a nation or move a city, must do this by the old Gospel which Paul carried with him whithersoever he went, and by which he shook the fortresses of Paganism in Asia and in Greece; in Antioch and Ephesus and Corinth.

The question as to a leader may or may not be raised in France; but *this* must be. Whether the

French Church is to accept its own old Confession may not be quite a serious matter; but whether she is to accept the truth embodied in it is vital. If God purposes to carry out the work by a leader, He will, when the time comes, bring out some man of faith and might from the school where He has been secretly training him for His work;—some Moses from Midian, some David from the sheep-folds, or some Knox from the galleys. If He means to do a new thing in the earth, and save His Israel without a captain, He will, at least, lift up the banner of the eternal truth, and provide His own standard-bearers, whether these may be the unknown or the well known, the humble or the great. "The Lord gave the word, great was the company of those that published it." The WORD given by Jehovah is the quickening sound; all other voices, true as they may be, are but echoes of the *one word,* and derive all their power from conformity to it.

CHRIST SAVES! This was the Reformation watch-word. It must be ours. He does not help man to save himself. He begins and ends the work of deliverance. *He* who justifies is God only, without the intervention of priest or church. *That* which justifies is the one completed expiation of THE ONE SACRIFICE; never to be repeated, nay, incapable of repetition. Not that which the sinner does or tries

to do; but that which has been done on Golgotha by the one Substitute: not the soul's fervour, or devotion, or agony, or mortification, or self-surrender, or intensity of longing, or renunciation of the world; none of these, nor all of them together can propitiate the Judge, or make it right for a righteous God to pardon unrighteous men. All the sinner's liabilities were fully undertaken by the Son of God; and He has fulfilled that which He undertook. "The chastisement of our peace was on Him:" and His endurance of the chastisement for us has secured the eternal peace for the ungodliest of the sons of men. The knowledge of this is forgiveness and everlasting life. The world needs no other Gospel, even in its worst estate; and he who knows the meaning of that Gospel will ask nothing better, nothing surer, to pacify the conscience, and give boldness in drawing near to God.

SECTION VIII.

European Chaos.

The *unsettlement* which exhibits itself throughout the Continental kingdoms, though not always making itself felt in revolutions and assassinations, is a much more serious phase of modern national life than most reckon it to be, and forms a very

important element in our estimate of evangelical work in France.

This unrest has now become chronic; troubling Christian men, alarming society, and perplexing statesmen. Passions govern and impel; extremes refuse to be reconciled; mutual distrust prevails; self-will is the motive-force; and, along with these, the love of money, the pursuit of pleasure, the mania for luxury, are all working together to increase the inquietude which prevails. Repose has become impossible, and, to most, undesirable.

Is this restlessness favourable or unfavourable to the religious movement which unquestionably is showing itself everywhere? For men are thinking about religion, discussing religious subjects, scrutinising the Bible, in the midst of this wide European whirl; and the most sacred questions are dragged into the ferment, sometimes reverentially, sometimes flippantly, and sometimes as a political element, to increase the confusion.

Not in France only are men thinking about religion, but in all nations, beginning with our own; southward in Spain, eastward in Russia. In some strange way, religious and irreligious things are mixed up, as if the various national minds, once set in motion, were resolved to discuss everything, for good or for evil.

The restlessness of *thought* at present is great; but the restlessness of *will* is greater and more alarming. It is this latter that so threatens Europe, and makes the prospect of tranquillity so hopeless. "Our lips are our own, who is lord over us?" is really the watchword (unconsciously a Bible one) of all classes.

Statesmen, in their blindness, have hitherto believed only in two remedies for all this,—the army and the priesthood. The latter has at last been "found out," and the broken reed is thrown aside. On the former they are still obliged to rely; but they are conscious how unsafe it is to govern souls by bayonets. Some, we believe, are now favouring the present Parisian movement as the only possible cure,—perhaps the last; for if it fails, what but revolution and revenge lie in front?

Can a calm religious movement go on in the heat of universal fever? Must we not wait till at least the delirium be over?

In most cases we should say so. But the Gospel in which we trust does not wait for the sick man's improvement. It takes him as he is. It meets his case at the very height of the fever, as well as after it is gone. It contains a sobering and tranquillising influence, such as makes it altogether suitable for the present state of France and of Europe.

Restlessness is, moreover, to be preferred to stagnation and sleep, in so far as mission-work is concerned. The former is more hopeful than the latter.

At the same time, let us admit that the restlessness we have described is of a very peculiar kind. It is not altogether that of aching hearts, yearning after better things, but that of disappointed men angry at everything around them, and bent on taking everything to pieces, and dissolving existing order. At its roots we find the two great forms of evil which are to mark the last days,—*unbelief* and *lawlessness*,—ἀπιστια and ἀνομια, the former bearing upon the *religious* character of the present times, the latter on the *political;* the one ripening into atheism, the other into liberalism;—the "man of sin" or "lawless one," who "doeth according to his will" (Dan. xi. 36), being the completion or product of both.

But with all this unsettlement around us there ought to be no distrust of the power of the Book of God to meet the evil. That restlessness is, after all, but human; while to meet it we have that Gospel which is the power of God and the wisdom of God. Whatever may be the awful developments of this combined "unbelief" and "lawlessness," foreannounced by the prophets, we have only to do with what lies immediately before us, and to measure the

strength of the evil, whatever that may be, with the power of that Gospel which is more than able to cope with it. For the "pulling down of strongholds," whether of wisdom or of strength, is the aim of the Gospel, and the end which it has so often accomplished in ages past. The "wisdom of the wise" has been "destroyed;" and "the understanding of the prudent brought to nought" by "the foolishness of preaching."

Ours is a Gospel of Divine power; and not all the boiling ingredients or fierce explosives of the great European cauldron can resist it. The Book which we carry with us to confront all this religious and political unruliness, is a Book which has done great things for the world hitherto, and which has not lost ought of its strength in these last days. It is a Book which has calmed many storms, and quenched many volcanoes; which has "revolutionised" many nations, and given new constitutions to many kingdoms; which has, on the one hand, broken up the prisons of many a despotism, and on the other said to the lawless mob, "Fear God, honour the king, and meddle not with them that are given to change." Its victories are not over; nay, its greatest are yet to come.

I say this in the full remembrance of that which is written, "In the last days perilous times shall come." But I would not for a moment have it

supposed that the Bible has become impotent, or its truths effete. I would not have it thought that the greatness of the evil could affect, in the slightest degree, the force of that Omnipotent Word which is "mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds" (2 Cor. x. 4).

I should like to remove the feeling of hoplessness with which some Christian men regard the nations of the Continent; as if their doom were sealed, and their populations given over by God to fill up the measure of their wickedness; as if the Gospel and the Bible had come too late; and as if the liberty which is now breaking up the civil bondage of the kingdoms were only the precursor of Nihilism and Socialism; and that to speak of it in connection with, or as opening the way for a nobler liberty, is to misname and to mislead.

The Word of God is not bound; nor has it become feeble like the words of man. Men may become disheartened, and lose their confidence in the Divine Record; but there it stands in its old strength; ready to do battle with all the phases of modern scepticism, as with those of ancient superstition: equally able to cope with the sophistries of European infidelity, as with the subtleties of Asiatic pantheism; still, as it has always been, the fire that melts the flint, the hammer that breaks the rock in

pieces, the sword that pierces to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit.

Let us do justice to the Book of God, and to the Gospel of Christ, in dealing with the European chaos, far or near. With such weapons we may face the evil hopefully. *Nil Desperandum.* "The word of the Lord is quick and powerful." We may trust it thoroughly.

Nor has the breath of the Spirit lost ought of its searching keenness or Divine vitality. He is still, as at Pentecost, the Spirit of power, breaking down and upbuilding, dissolving and restoring, smiting and healing, overthrowing error, and giving truth the victory. That same mighty breath that swept through Antioch and Philippi and Colosse, destroying the idols and setting up the true God, can permeate Paris and Berlin and Vienna and Rome, with like irresistible potency as of old.

It may be that this last battle of the world is to prove the most terrible of all. Satan is evidently bringing up his reserves, and arming his hosts for the heaviest onset the Church has yet seen. Ancient Paganism fell before the Gospel; mediæval superstition gave way before it. But will not these new organisations of evil, in which the human heart is displaying its deadliest antipathies to God, prove too strong for it?

Will it not have to retire discomfited before those "armies of the aliens?"

No. If this be the last battle, there must, out of it, come a last victory for the Book of God. Whether that victory may result in a wide acceptance of the truth over Europe is a question I do not undertake to answer; but that there will be victory of some kind for the Bible I believe,—victory which will show that there is no amount of antagonism to God which it cannot face, and no strength of human evil with which it cannot cope successfully, as "the power of God unto salvation."

The time may be short, the Divine judgments may be imminent; but the Bible and the Gospel it contains will be displayed, in their power to contend with the last form of earth's wickedness as successfully as with the first.

Shall I say that in France we have at present some signs of a coming harvest? Is it too much to affirm that its fields are whitening for the sickle? Am I ascribing too much importance to the present day of small things to call this Parisian work the first-fruits?

I do not think so. The work is so singular, so out of the common beat, both in its origin and progress; there is so little of the human element, so much of the Divine; the openings are so providen-

tial, the agencies are so unostentatious, and the success is so unexpected, that we become more and more satisfied we are not running unsent, nor likely to labour unblest.

All the more do we feel this because of the present state of Europe, and the despair among statesmen of being able to cope with the force that is generating and accumulating everywhere, by either gold or steel; nay, even by education or culture.

That which is to arrest the perilous fermentation, —which is to bring order out of chaos,—must be something more powerful, yet more ethereal, than anything that has yet been attempted. Man has tried his schemes of empiricism, and failed in every one. God is now pointing us to something which is no experiment or desperate remedy, but a cure, tried and infallible, which has done great things in past ages when allowed full play, and which is capable of doing even greater things than in the past,— "the foolish things confounding the wise; the weak things confounding the things that are mighty."

Of all known things light is the most subtle and silent, yet also the most powerful. It is LIGHT,— more silent and subtle, yet also more powerful than anything on earth, that is now going forth,—the light of no material sun,—the light of Him who is light itself, and in whom is no darkness at all. It

remains to be seen what this light is to do for Europe, and to what extent the darkness of the last days is to be affected by its shining.

It is this light that is now beginning to shine over the fields of "fair France," and to whiten them for the harvest. It is this that is now giving that great people a better alternative than what has hitherto been offered them,—Popery or Infidelity, —and making many of them feel that in quitting the former they do not need to embrace the latter; and that there is a sure faith, resting on an infallible Book, which no Pope of Rome can give, and which no philosopher of the Academy can take away.

APPENDIX.

SUMMARY OF REPORTS.

To show the small beginnings of the work, and its steady progress year after year, from November 1871 to the end of 1878, I add here the leading statistics, as given at the end of each Report.

FIRST REPORT.

From November 1871 to January 1873.

Number of Sittings.

Belleville, . . .	108	Montmartre, . .	150
Ménilmontant, . .	123	Faubourg St. Antoine,	134

Total, 515.

French Meetings during the year, ...	456
Do. for Children, ...	89
Aggregate attendance, ...	37,957
Bibles and other Books issued from Lending Libraries, .	701
Tracts, Scripture Portions, &c., given, ...	49,766
English Meetings at Montmartre, ...	36
Aggregate attendance at ditto, ...	785
Books from English Lending Library, ...	179

SECOND REPORT.

From January 1873 to January 1874.

Number of Sittings.

Belleville, . . .	115	Rue Monge, . .	116
Ménilmontant, . .	171	Grenelle, . . .	100
Montmartre, . .	162	La Chapelle, . .	140
Faubourg St. Antoine,	132	Les Ternes, . .	120

Total—Stations, 8 ; Sittings, 1056.

French Meetings for Adults, ...	573
Aggregate attendance at ditto, ...	61,587
Average attendance at each Adult Meeting, . . .	107
Sunday-school Meetings, ...	235
Number of Scholars in Sunday Schools, about . . .	340
Number of Teachers in ditto, about	22
Children's Thursday Afternoon Meetings, ...	142
Aggregate attendance at Sunday Schools and Children's Meetings, ...	19,358
Soldiers' Meetings, ...	9
Aggregate attendance at ditto, besides many soldiers at the other Services, ...	219
Young Women's Meetings, about	60
Aggregate attendance at ditto, about	1,000
Total French Religious Meetings during the year, . .	1,019
Total attendance at ditto, ...	82,164
Classes for teaching English, ...	144
Aggregate attendance at ditto, ...	6,804
Visits paid, upwards of	300
Scripture Portions distributed, ...	17,922
Tracts, &c., do., ...	36,912
Bibles and other Books issued from French Lending Libraries,	1,550
English Meetings at Montmartre, ...	94
Aggregate attendance at ditto, about	1,200
English Sunday School at ditto, average attendance, 24 scholars and 4 teachers.	

THIRD REPORT.

FROM JANUARY 1874 TO JANUARY 1875.

Number of Sittings.

Belleville, . . .	108	La Chapelle, . .	185
Montmartre, . .	314	Les Ternes, . .	120
Ménilmontant, . .	184	Montsouris, . .	88
Faubourg St. Antoine,	140	La Villette, . .	80
Quartier Latin, . .	150	Les Batignolles, . .	141
Grenelle, . . .	100		

Total—Stations, 11 ; Sittings, 1610.

French Meetings for Adults, Jan. 1 to Sept. 30, . .	1,040
Aggregate attendance at ditto, ...	100,437
Average attendance at each Adult Meeting, . . .	97
Bible Classes, attendance	1,632
Prayer Meetings (commenced October), ...	348
Average attendance of Adults per week, ...	2,000
Sunday-school Meetings, ...	462
Number of Scholars in Sunday Schools, about . . .	450
Number of Teachers in ditto, ...	36
Children's Thursday Afternoon Meetings, ...	244
Aggregate attendance at Sunday Schools and Children's Meetings, ...	27,722
Average attendance of Children per week, . . .	533
Young Women's Classes, attendance	1,300
Total of French Religious Meetings during the year, .	1,893
Total attendance at ditto, ...	131,439
Six Classes for teaching English, attended by a weekly average of	100 to 120
Visits Paid, ...	1,418
Scripture Portions distributed, ...	11,020
Tracts, &c. &c., do., ...	56,394
Bibles and Testaments circulated, in addition to those lent from Libraries, upwards of	132
English Meetings at Montmartre, ...	92
Aggregate attendance at ditto, about	1,350

English Sunday School at Montmartre, average attendance, 24 scholars and 4 teachers.
Singing Practices.
Soldiers' Meetings at Faubourg St. Antoine and Grenelle have been attended by 5,145

FOURTH REPORT.

From January 1875 to January 1876.

Number of Sittings.

Belleville, . . .	302	Avenue de Clichy, .	197
Ménilmontant, . .	184	Rue de Turbigo, . .	124
Montmartre, . .	315	Cité Industrielle, .	141
Faubourg St. Antoine	152	Gare d'Ivry, . .	192
Rue Monge . .	150	Vaugirard, . . .	120
Grenelle, . . .	150	Bercy, . . .	104
La Chapelle, . .	185	Passy, . . .	100
Les Ternes, . .	202		
Montsouris, . .	76	Total, .	2,774
La Villette, . .	80		

French Meetings for Adults, Jan. 1 to Dec. 31, 1875, .	1,418
Aggregate attendance at ditto, ...	147,803
Public Lectures, ...	9
Attendance at ditto, ...	1,419
Average attendance at each Adult Meeting, . . .	105
Bible Classes, attendance, ...	5,359
Prayer Meetings, do., ...	2,058
Average attendance of Adults per week throughout the year,	3,012
Sunday-school Meetings, ...	659
Number of Scholars in Sunday Schools, about . . .	730
Number of Teachers in ditto, ...	55
Aggregate attendance at ditto, ...	25,599
Children's Thursday Afternoon Meetings, . . .	340
Aggregate attendance at ditto, ...	15,070
Average attendance of Children per week, . . .	782

Total of French Religious Meetings during the year,	2,682
Total attendance at ditto,	197,366
Four Classes for teaching English and two for teaching French, Reading, &c., attendance weekly,	130
Ouvroir for Poor Women at Les Ternes Station.	
Meetings for the Practice of Psalmody.	
Visits paid, above	2,500
Scripture Portions distributed,	19,760
Tracts, &c. &c., do.,	72,170
Bibles and Testaments circulated, in addition to those lent from Libraries, upwards of	130
Bibles and other Books issued from fourteen French Lending Libraries,	2,578
English Meetings at Montmartre and Les Ternes, about	70
Aggregate attendance at ditto, about	1,100
English Sunday School at Montmartre, average attendance, 25 scholars and 3 teachers.	

FIFTH REPORT.

From January 1876 to January 1877.

Number of Sittings.

Belleville,	400	Boulevard Voltaire,	140
Montmartre,	315	Passy,	184
aubourg St. Antoine,	372	Bercy,	104
Rue de Rivoli,	270	Rue Monge,	150
Ménilmontant,	184	Grenelle,	150
La Chapelle,	185	Gare d'Ivry,	192
Les Ternes,	202	Vaugirard,	162
Avenue de Clichy,	197	Montsouris,	76
Rue La Condamine,	120		
La Villette,	160	Total,	3,763
Rue Charlot,	200		

French Meetings for Adults, Jan. 1 to Dec. 1, 1876,	1,919
Aggregate attendance at ditto,	232,923

Adult Bible Class Meetings (six weekly),	251
Aggregate attendance at ditto,	9,322
Prayer Meetings,	91
Attendance at ditto,	4,558
Average attendance of Adults per week throughout the year,	4,746
Sunday-school Meetings,	745
Aggregate attendance at ditto,	33,770
Number of Teachers,	74
Children's Week-day Services,	592
Aggregate attendance at ditto,	33,545
Young People's Meetings and Bible Classes,	107
Attendance at ditto,	5,544
Average attendance of Young People per week throughout the year,	1,440
Total of French Religious Meetings during the year,	3,705
Total attendance at ditto,	319,729
Meetings for the Practice of Psalmody,	249
Attendance at ditto,	32,658

Five Classes for teaching English, and Two for teaching French Reading, &c., are conducted weekly.

SIXTH REPORT.

From January 1877 to January 1878.

Number of Sittings.

Rue de Rivoli,	270	Grenelle,	150
Belleville,	400	Gare d'Ivry,	192
Montmartre,	550	Bercy,	161
Faubourg St. Antoine,	372	Boulevard Voltaire,	140
Rue des Dames,	387	Rue Charlot,	200
Les Ternes,	202	Rue La Condamine,	120
La Chapelle,	185	Montsouris,	78
Ménilmontant,	184	Rue de Meaux,	80
Rue Monge,	150	Puteaux,	150
Rue d'Allemagne,	310	Boulogne-sur-Seine,	104
Passy,	149		
Vaugirard,	162	Total,	4,694

French Meetings for Adults, Jan. 1 to Dec. 31, 1877,	2,438
Aggregate attendance at ditto,	325,653
(Of the above, 367 meetings, attended by 74,849 persons, at Rue de Rivoli station.)	
Adult Bible Class Meetings (six weekly),	324
Aggregate attendance at ditto,	12,468
French Prayer Meetings,	170
Attendance at ditto,	10,493
Aggregate Adult attendance during the year,	348,614
Sunday-school Meetings,	731
Attendance at ditto,	39,775
Children's Week-day Services,	916
Attendance at ditto,	48,742
Young People's Meetings and Juvenile Bible Classes,	542
Attendance at ditto,	23,260
Aggregate attendance of the Young during the year,	111,777
Total of French Religious Meetings during the year,	5,121
Total attendance at ditto,	460,591
Psalmody Meetings,	329
Attendance at ditto,	50,507
Eight Classes for Teaching English are conducted weekly.	
Ouvroirs for poor Women are established in five stations, and three others are lent for the purpose.	
Girls' Industrial Schools are established at Les Ternes and at the Gare d'Ivry.	
Two Rooms are lent for Young Men's Christian Associations.	
Domiciliary Visits paid, above	2,700
Scripture Portions distributed,	24,528
Tracts, &c., ditto,	70,492
Bibles and Testaments sold, given, and circulated (exclusive of those lent from Libraries and Children's Rewards),	250
Books issued from French Lending Libraries (including 290 Bibles, &c.),	3,000
Weekly English Prayer Meeting of Workers at Belleville; average attendance,	20

SEVENTH REPORT.

From January 1878 to January 1879.

LIST OF STATIONS IN PARIS.

		Sittings
Salle Evangélique,	Place du Trocadéro, Passy,	520
Centre de Paris,	37 Rue de Rivoli (corner of the Rue de la Tacherie),	270
Belleville,	102 Rue de Belleville,	400
Montmartre,	56 Boulevard Ornano,	550
Faubourg St. Antoine,	142 Rue du Faubourg,	372
Batignolles,	4 Rue des Dames,	387
Les Ternes,	53 Avenue de Wagram,	202
La Chapelle	29 Boulevard de la Chapelle,	204
Ménilmontant,	90 Boulevard de Ménilmontant,	184
Quartier Latin,	72 Rue Monge,	190
La Villette,	90 Rue d'Allemagne,	310
Popincourt,	123 Boulevard Voltaire,	200
Vaugirard,	161 Boulevard de Vaugirard,	162
Grenelle,	59 Rue Letellier,	180
Gare d'Ivry,	169 Boulevard de la Gare,	192
Bercy,	74 Boulevard de Bercy,	161
Quartier du Temple,	77 Rue Charlot,	200
Batignolles,	15 Rue de la Condamine,	120
Montsouris,	21 Rue de la Tombe-Issoire,	78
La Villette,	93 Rue de Meaux,	80
Puteaux,	5 Rue Saulnier,	150
Boulogne-sur-Seine,	70 Rue d'Aguesseau,	80
	Total number of Sittings in Paris,	5192

LIST OF STATIONS IN LYONS.

La Guillotière,	173 Grande Rue de la Guillotière,	120
Les Brotteaux,	65 Avenue de Noailles,	165
Vaise,	2 Rue de la Pyramide,	135
La Croix Rousse,	4 Petite Rue de Cuire,	190
	Total number of Sittings in Lyons,	610

SUMMARY OF THE YEAR'S WORK.

Paris.

French Meetings for Adults, Jan. 1 to Dec. 31, 1878,	2,788
Aggregate attendance at ditto,	421,370
German Meetings (15) at Salle Evangélique, attendance,	250
(Of the above, 473 meetings, attended by 100,023 persons, at the Salle Evangélique, and 365 meetings, attended by 85,012 persons, at the Rue de Rivoli station.)	
Adult Bible Classes,	294
Aggregate attendance at ditto,	13,374
French Prayer Meetings,	151
Attendance at ditto,	10,356
Aggregate Adult attendance during the year,	446,108
Sunday-school Meetings,	800
Attendance at ditto,	41,708
Children's Week-day Services,	945
Attendance at ditto,	42,981
Young People's Meetings and Juvenile Bible Classes,	469
Attendance at ditto,	25,421
Aggregate attendance of the Young during the year,	110,110
Total of Religious Meetings in Paris during the year,	5,471
Total attendance at Religious Meetings in Paris during the year,	556,218
Psalmody Meetings,	250
Attendance at ditto,	43,710
Several Classes for Teaching English are conducted weekly.	
Ouvroirs for Poor Women are established in seven of the stations.	
Girls' Industrial Schools are established at Les Ternes and Gare d'Ivry, attended by an average of 160 per week.	
Two Rooms are lent for Young Men's Christian Associations.	
Domiciliary Visits paid, above	2,200
New Testaments earned by regular attendance at Adult Meetings,	1,400
Bibles and Testaments sold, given, and circulated (exclusive of those lent from Libraries and Children's Rewards),	100

Books issued from French Lending Libraries, including 120 Bibles, &c.,	2,781
Scripture Portions distributed,	26,203
Tracts, &c., distributed (including 48,000 at Salle Evangélique, and 600 in various languages on a Continental Tour),	151,535
Weekly Prayer Meeting of the workers of the Mission held at the Mission Office, Belleville.	

LYONS.

(*Mission commenced 17th November*, 1878.)

Meetings held,	41
Aggregate attendance at ditto,	5,815
Tracts, Scripture Portions, &c., distributed,	4,838

ERRATA.

Page 196, line 18, *for* abomenables *read* abominables.
Page 237, line 10, *for* October *read* November.

THE END.

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